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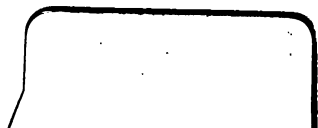
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SONGS OF SUNSHINE.

SONGS OF SUNSHINE.

THE
UNIVERSITY OF
CHICAGO
PRESS

SONGS OF SUNSHINE.

BY

MARIANNE FARNINGHAM,

*Author of "Lays and Lyrics of the Blessed Life," "Girlhood," "Leaves from Elim,"
"Home Life," "Echoes from the Valley," &c.*



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SONGS OF SUNSHINE.



A MORNING SONG.

“ My voice shalt Thou hear in the morning, O Lord.”

FATHER most merciful ! Glad, in the dawning,
All things awake to sing praises to Thee ;
Thou art the giver of joy in the morning,
Spreading Thy sunlight o'er meadow and sea ;
Bright birds soar up in the thin air to greet Thee,
Sweet-scented blossoms look forth for Thy face,
And Thy children go out into daylight to meet Thee,
Finding Thy footprints in every new place.

Thou hast been near when the shadows, like sorrows,
Darkened the world into silence and night ;
Thou hast been near when the hastening to-morrows
Laden with duties stepped forth into sight ;
Thou hast been with us when hours were the fleetest,
Passing like dreams from the hands that would hold,
Thou hast remained when the moments were sweetest,
Changing the dross of the time into gold.

Shall we not praise Thee, O Father most tender ?
Shall we not sing of Thy wonderful love ?
Now that the day breaks, oh what shall we render
For this Thy new gift coming down from above ?

Every new day some great wonder is telling,
Every fresh hour does some promise fulfil ;
And this morn, while Thy praises are rising and swelling,
Our joy is that Thou dost abide with us still.

A day has been born, a new day has been given,
Fresh from the hand of its Maker and King ;
It gently floats down from its birthplace in heaven,
And waits our acceptance with all it shall bring ;
It comes from our Father with hands full of blessing,
Some light loads to bear, and some labours to share ;
And whether its scenes shall be glad or distressing,
We greet it with joy and begin it with prayer.

Father most merciful, give for our guerdon
The joy of Thy presence whate'er may befall,
Give courage to fight, or to carry the burden,
And faith to be cheerful and quiet through all ;
The patience of hope and the joy of forbearing,
Oh, give to us now in the gladness of light,
And when silence and shade are the evening declaring,
Oh, give us Thy pardon to comfort at night.

“ My voice shalt Thou hear in the joy of the morning,”
So sings the glad heart as it rests by the sea,
And waits for the bliss of that wonderful dawning,
When eyes that have slept shall be opened by Thee ;
Ere long on the earth shall that great day be breaking,
And all from their sleep shall come forth at Thy word,
Oh, then to the joy of Thy kingdom awaking,
“ My voice shalt Thou hear in the morning, O Lord.”

IN GREEN PASTURES.

“He maketh me to lie down in green pastures.”

’TWAS the time of the July weather, and high was the sun in the
sky,
But so long were the hours of labour that the toilers would often
sigh,
And they dreamed of the quiet waters, and the tender grass and
flowers
Where the glad birds sing their anthems, and there fall refreshing
showers ;
Yet the dreams were but mocking phantoms, and still in the dusty
street
They sighed for the rest God giveth in the midst of the summer
heat.

But there came to the weary workers at the time that He deemed
the best
For the head and the heart’s refreshing His guerdon of blessed
rest ;
With a smile that was kind and tender He called them to come
aside,
And away in the shady forest or the slopes of the meadows hide,
And soon from the hills and woodlands, through the lingering
summer days,
There rose to the sunny heaven the sound of the workers’ praise—

“He maketh me to rest
Where the greenest pastures be,
The King who knoweth best
When the hands toil wearily,
He bids the eyes to close
In a time of glad repose.

"He *maketh* me to take
The joy which I dared not ask.
Who, working for His sake,
Would care to leave his task?
But at last at the Lord's commands
Comes the time for the folded hands.

"He maketh me to *lie down*!
Not to stand for a moment's rest,
But to sleep on the heather brown,
Or watch the sun in the west,
With leisure to feel and love,
And talk to the King above.

"He maketh me rest afar
Where the fair *green pastures* are,
Not near to the dusty street
With its noise and its burning heat,
Disturbed by the strife and rush,
But here in the meadow's hush.

"Oh, sweet is the rest to me
Where the quiet waters be,
All day will I gladly sing
Of the love of the gracious King,
Who gives to the child oppressed
The season of precious rest."

'Twas the time of the sultry weather, but the Master, with pitying smile,
Looked tenderly down on the workers who were thankful to rest awhile,
And He scented the air with roses, and spoke in the fragrant breeze
To the singers who joined the anthems of the birds in the spreading trees,
Till they joyfully said together, "His servants are always blest,
For after the heat and burden He giveth His perfect rest."

And I saw that the joy was greatest, that the Master Himself was
there

Blessing the resting workers in the calm of the summer air ;
He perfected strength in weakness, He took from the heart its pain,
He gave to His own good lessons ere they went to their work again ;
And so it was little wonder that from mountain and stream and wood
There arose through the air a chorus, " O praise Him, for He is
good."

THE TIME OF THE SINGING OF BIRDS.

" OH, the weary, dreary winter !"
Do not mind it, it is past ;
That wild snowstorm, strong and bitter,
That fell on you was the last.
Now the sunbeams dance and glisten,
And the sparkling southern sea
Brings to shore a gladsome message,
Friend, for you and me.

All the world was sad and silent,
Not a day was bright and fair ;
Only sighs of sin or sorrow
Seemed to fill the heavy air.
Now the thrush and blackbird's solos
Rise from many a budding tree,
Soon shall burst the great joy-chorus,
Friend, for you and me.

Not a daisy in the meadow
Dared to open its closed eyes,
Scarce the violets had courage
To confront the wrathful skies.
Now a thousand laughing beauties,
Sweet, and very fair to see,
Lift their voices in glad greeting,
Friend, to you and me.

SONGS OF SUNSHINE.

Bare of leaf, the wintry forest
Was the home of naked trees,
And the tall forms shrank and shivered,
From the ice-cold, cruel breeze.
Now a fair new robe is making,
And each twig of every tree
Has some young leaves safely folded,
Friend, for you and me.

Do you know how earth is waking
To the dawn of pleasure's day ?
Do you hear the lark's glad matins
Sung in temples far away ?
Oh, at last the guest is coming,
Whom our hearts have longed to see ;
Coming laden with good blessings,
Friend, for you and me.

Let the sadness and the sorrow
For God's brighter gifts make room,
Since the time of the glad singing
Of the merry birds has come ;
Let us also sing sweet praises,
God has caused the spring to be !
There's a part in earth's full chorus,
Friend, for you and me.

THE SNOWDROPS.

THEY are merrily lifting their pleasant heads
From the covered depths of their wintry beds,
And as they are thrust through the softening earth
They seem to promise a summer's birth ;
They nod their greeting, and bend to say,
" The flowers are coming, we lead the way."

It is true there is frost in the thickened air,
That fields are empty, that trees are bare,
That stems look shrivelled, and thin, and old,
That lanes are barren, and hill-sides cold,
But shortly the winter shall disappear,
For snowdrops have come, and the spring is near.

We know that the hard, brown garden beds,
That are dotted o'er with the snowdrops' heads,
Shall be, through the beautiful months, the place
Of delicate beauty and winsome grace ;
For crowds of blossoms shall smile and glow
In rainbow hues where the snowdrops grow.

So we gladly welcome the pure white flowers,
For they brighten the dulness of dreary hours,
And they tell of the azure skies above,
Which shall shine when the clouds of mist remove,
And of gay birds coming on rapid wing,
To fill with music the merry spring.

These flowers of promise that deck the land
Are loving gifts from our Father's hand ;
They tell us that sorrow will soon be o'er,
And the light, as it spreads to the sea and shore,
Shall bring to the tired and dreary heart
Some token true of a brighter part.

Let all who look on the snowdrops white
Thank God once more for the cheery sight,
And take fresh courage. Each day shall bring
Nearer and nearer the joy of spring ;
And those whom trouble has rendered sad,
Shall have God in heaven to make them glad.

THE CUCKOO'S SONG.

OVER green meadows where daisies grow,
And buttercups shine with a golden glow,
Where the cowslip raises its tender head,
Where the glad bees hum, and the young lambs tread,
And aspiring grasses together throng,
We hear the sound of the cuckoo's song.

The birds have gathered from south and west
To sing in the homes that they love the best ;
They warble many a praiseful word,
And hold " May meetings " with sweet accord ;
But the favourite speaker of all the throng
Is heard when we list to the cuckoo's song.

It tells that the hawthorn hedge is green,
And soon shall the blossoms white be seen ;
It says it is time for the earth to raise
Its hallelujahs of joyous praise ;
It promises days that are fair and long,
And therefore love we the cuckoo's song.

It takes us back to the merry Mays
Of the happy, far-away childhood's days,
The time of wonderful life-like dreams
Of silver seas, where the sunlight gleams,
Of hours to which nothing but joy belongs,
And life is as cheery as cuckoo songs.

It takes us forward to strange new bliss,
When we all shall be waked by an angel's kiss,
To look on a land that is bathed in light,
And wear a garment of snowy white,
And take our places God's hosts among,
And wish no more for the cuckoo's song.

It bids our hearts to be never sad
For the winter's stay, but be strong and glad,
To share in the joy of the sunny hours,
And cull the honey from all life's flowers ;
And do good work as we pass along,
Cheered by the sound of the cuckoo's song.

So who does not welcome the singer back
To the old grey woods and familiar track ?
He brings a message of hope to all,
Do you hear it under the strange sweet call ?
" God sends you gladness, it hastes along,
And the earnest comes in the cuckoo's song."

THE KING'S FACE.

THE sun shone down from the bright blue skies
On the laughing earth below,
The golden buttercups gaily gleamed
In the midst of the daisy-snow ;
The water laved the forget-me-nots,
And the bursting buds of May
Adorned the hedges arrayed in green,
And the world was glad that day.

The larks went up through the tremulous air,
And they poured a shower of song
That found its way to the hearts of men
As they slowly passed along.
The blackbirds sang and the cuckoos called,
And the bees went humming by,
And fields and meadows and merry birds
Told that the King was nigh.

The church bells chimed till the place was filled
With the music soft and clear,
The sound stole out to the hills afar
And over the valleys near,
And the tale they brought was a gladsome one
To hear on that Sabbath-day,
For it said that the King whom we all desired
Was coming along the way.

The air was sweet with the scent of flowers,
And it blew from the balmy West ;
The week was over, and care and toil
Had taught us to pray for rest ;
But we looked to heaven with wistful eyes,
And longed that the day might bring
The crowning joy and the perfect peace
Of the presence of the King.

And He swiftly came to the waiting hearts,
And the eyes by grief made dim ;
He gave repose to the weary ones
Who had often sighed for Him.
A gift of strength to the weak He brought,
The timid He rendered brave,
And those who sighed for the wasted past
Knew that He came to save.

The sunshine streamed through the window-panes
Of the churches, great and small,
But the peace was deeper than summer brings
Which rested upon them all ;
The child's fair face grew strangely glad,
And the old man's snowy hair
Was bowed in thanks for the hallowed joy
That came at the hour of prayer.

And the King went farther to silent homes
Where the mourners sat that day,
To beds where the sick and the dying were,
And He took the pain away ;

And oh, wherever the Master came,
He brightened the meanest place,
For the summer comes to the inmost soul
Of all who but see His face.

A THOUGHT FOR PASSION WEEK.

We pass again through the old, old story,
And read new meanings between the lines ;
We look once more at the grief and glory
Around the cross where the true light shines ;
And this is the comfort we have to-day—
Christ once died ; but He lives for aye.

Of all He did we can read together ;
We cannot forget the good words He said ;
And even the joy of the bright spring weather
Hides not the thought of the Saviour dead ;
But this is the song that we sing to-day—
He died once only ; He lives for aye.

We think to-day of the Saviour's pity,
His love for children, His care for men,
The tears He wept o'er the doomèd city,
The health and healing He brought again ;
And know, with gladness, His travail o'er,
He died ; but He liveth for evermore.

How closely and fondly He drew about Him
In those last hours the friends He loved ;
He knew how sad they would be without Him,
And unto the end His care He proved.
He told them that though He must pass away,
He would rise again, and would live for aye.

But, ere He left them, He prayed the Father
 To keep His children through His name ;
 Not to take them to heaven, but help them rather
 To live for His glory, free from blame.
 And then He passed into death's wild strife,
 That He might give them eternal life.

We can but mourn for His mighty sorrow,
 The bitter hours in Gethsemane ;
 The clouded morn and the dark to-morrow ;
 But now we think of the Saviour free,
 And sing with triumph this song to-day,
 The Lord once died ; but He lives for aye.

So why should we ever be sad and sighing,
 While flowers in beauty grow bright and bloom ?
 And why should we think of our Master, dying,
 And going down to the darksome tomb ?
 Death could not hold Him, He lives to-day,
 And because He rose we shall live for aye.

THE EASTER MESSAGE.

“ He is risen : He is not here : go your way, tell His disciples and Peter that
 He goeth before you.”—MARK xvi. 6, 7.

ONCE, the three women, no longer affrighted,
 Told to sad watchers a word that delighted,
 Proving to them that their mourning was o'er ;
 This was the message that changed their deep sadness
 Into the joy of a sudden great gladness,—
“ Jesus is risen, He goeth before.”

Long years have passed, but each spring-time returning,
 Touches some hearts with an infinite yearning,
 And bids timid lips to be silent no more ;

Love sends them forth in an earnest endeavour,
To comfort the mourners with this word for ever,
 "Jesus is risen, He goeth before."

Easter has come ; and again with devotion,
Disciples are telling in tones of emotion,
 The tidings of gladness on every far shore ;
Sad hearts grow light at the good proclamation,
"Jesus once died for the whole world's salvation,"
 "Jesus is risen, He goeth before."

Hosts of fair children whose thoughtful eyes glisten,
Young men and maidens who love as they listen,
 Hear once again the glad story told o'er ;
World-weary men with tired heads and grave faces
And aged ones hear, as they wait for His graces,
 "Jesus is risen, He goeth before."

Far, far away, o'er the blue, wind-stirred ocean,
Strangers are moved by the gentle commotion,
 Thinking of Christ who the world's sorrows bore ;
In ice-fields and palm groves the people are praying,
And men of all colours are thankfully saying,—
 "Jesus is risen, He goeth before."

And as we go forth, fellow-travellers meeting,
We also take up the glad words of that greeting,
 And say to each other, Be sorry no more.
For why should we think of our Saviour as dying?
And why wait at Calvary, mournfully sighing,
 Since *"Jesus is risen and goeth before"* ?

Him let us follow with joy overflowing
And hearts that at thought of the Master are glowing,
 And eager to serve Him till time is no more.
And soon a glad Easter to us will be given,
We also shall rise and be with Him in heaven,
 Since *"Jesus is risen and goeth before."*

THE CHILDREN'S EASTER HYMNS.

THEY gather together for joyous songs,
The children whom Christ has blest,
Not yet are they burdened with care or woe,
But they know of the Master's rest,
They know how He taketh the little ones
Into His arms again,
They have heard how the weary and sinful crowds
Were healed of their sin and pain.

They know the story, so often told,
How the King of the worlds came down,
Laying aside His robes of light
And His wonderful starry crown,
To love and labour, to do and bear
All things for the good of men,
To be rejected, but still toil on,
To suffer, yet love again.

They did not mourn through the days of Lent,
Nor fast for a grief long past,
Though they thought sometimes of the Saviour's death
And the rest that He had at last.
The children cannot be sighing long,
They are glad of the Easter joy ;
Their faces beam with the light of love,
While praises their lips employ.

And yet, is it aught to these little ones
That at Easter a garden-grave
Was opened in silence at break of day,
And One who was strong to save
Arose and came to His mourning friends,
And proved that He lived again,
That all who loved Him should die in peace,
And rise with the King to reign ?

It is very much to the children bands.
God open their eyes to see,
Till they gratefully say of the Lord of life,
"He liveth and loveth me."
Till they come to His feet in their early days,
And practise the songs they sing,
Who have gained with gladness their Easter-tide,
And live with the risen King.

Far, far away from the heavenly hosts,
Are the children singing now,
But the echoes sweet from the better land
Come to them where they bow :
They read this truth in the young spring flowers,
That rise from the cold, dark sod,
"The soul that loveth shall rise again
And live with the Son of God."

A PRAYER FOR SPRING.

"Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation."

THY sun is on the meadows, and Thy flowers adorn the hills,
There is a sparkling pleasure on the rivers and the rills ;
The green earth smiles in gladness to the clear blue skies above,
And everything rejoices in the living Father's love ;
But I cry in supplication : Let me share the spring I see—
The joy of Thy salvation, O God, restore to me.

I hear the world's joy-music, for the spring is in the vale,
The cuckoo sings for gladness, and the loving nightingale ;
And at the hour of daybreak their sonnets fill the air,
While I can only whisper at Thy feet my passion-prayer :
O Giver of the gladness that in all Thy world I see,
The joy of Thy salvation in pity give to me.

I, too, would join the singing, and I, too, would share the joy ;
 These hours of dawning summer I would fain for Thee employ ;
 There have been happy seasons when my life was full of song,
 And, marching to heart-music, I have passed Thy ways along ;
 But then it was Thy presence which had made me glad and free,
 O Father, in Thy tenderness restore that joy to me.

How can I speak to others as in happy days of yore ?
 My heart is sad with sighing for the bliss I knew before ;
 I walk amid the shadows, though Thy sunshine lights the earth,
 Nor bees, nor birds, nor laughing flowers, can move me with their
 mirth ;
 I am almost too tired to hope, I can but cry to Thee,
 The joy of Thy salvation, O God, restore to me.

O give me the renewing which Thou sendest with the spring,
 And move my heart to loving, and teach my lips to sing ;
 If Thou dost say "Forgiven," I shall have my summer days,
 And fill them all with happy songs to the loving Father's praise.
 O pitiful and mighty One, Thy mercy let me see,
 And the joy of Thy salvation, O God, restore to me.

FIRST VIOLETS.

VERY tired I was, with longing
 For the coming of the spring,
 For the gloom of lingering winter
 Darkened over everything.
 Cruel winds that had no pity
 Rushed across the snow-clad moor,
 And they beat against the casement,
 And came stealing through the door.
 All without the day was sombre,
 And within my heart was sad,
 And I said, Oh, weary winter,
 When shall spring-time make me glad ?

Then inside a folded letter,
Sent through kindly thought of me,
Came a bunch of purple violets
From a home beside the sea ;
And the written message told me
That they grew in open air,
In some spot where herald sunbeams
Came to make March mornings fair.
And to say that though the winter
Had been long and desolate,
Glad some spring was on her journey,
Though her coming might be late.

Then it seemed that some kind fairy
Moved about my sunless room,
For I had a golden vision
Of bright flowers and sweet perfume ;
Primrose carpets spread before me,
And the fair anemones,
And moss-beds, with bright fern-curtains,
And the wild-wood's symphonies
Mingled with the cuckoos' voices,
And lark-songs across the lea,
And I said, Oh, spring-time hasten
With thy wealth of joy to me.

But the violets made me patient
(We can wait when hope is strong),
And though sleet-showers fell about me,
I could sing a summer-song.
For my heart had taken comfort
Since each fragrant violet
Told me of a joy-time coming,
Whose full sweetness was not yet.
One fair flower brings others after,
And warm suns and gentle showers
Soon shall make the earth a garden
With gay multitudes of flowers.

And the violets in whispers
Told me something better still.
Very long I have been waiting
For God's peace my heart to fill ;
For the rest of the eternal ;
For the day that has no night ;
For the end of earth's dark passage,
And the dawn of endless light.
And the blessings that come to me
From the presence of the King,
Are the first flowers that assure me
Of the hastening of *that* spring.

THE ROBIN IN MAY.

ONE in a chorus has little note.
There are sounds of joy from a scarlet throat.
Plaintive, pathetic, then sweetly glad,
Are the songs of the singer in red vest clad ;
But the orchestra, crowded with art and grace,
Can give to the robin no foremost place,
For the solos in glees, songs, and madrigals,
Are sung by the thrushes and nightingales.

It is true that in winters of frost and snow,
When the world is in mourning, and sighs for woe,
When the woods are silent of mirth and song,
And the reign of the Cold King is harsh and long,
That the little singer with cheery breast
Is the one great favourite loved the best,
And the songs he sings to the household bands
Are gladly applauded by hearts and hands.

But the earth's great festival held in May
Bids us all rejoice in the holiday,

And armies of birds with the sun come out,
The cuckoos utter their greeting shout,
The blackbirds answer the joyous lark,
And the woods are vocal from dawn to dark,
For the sweetest singers have come in throngs,—
And nobody values the robin's songs.

But the little bird in the glowing vest
Has no feelings of envy within his breast ;
He treats not the singers with cold disdain,
Nor is silent and dull, though his songs are vain.
He knows how to live in the bitter frost,
But the summer to him is no pleasure lost ;
He exults in the growing of leaves and flowers,
And sings to himself through the sunny hours.

He is willing to wait for the praise of men
Till his opportunity comes again.
He is glad in their joy while the sunbeams last,
And faithful still when the summer is past.
So his little part he will gladly sing
In the musical chorus of happy spring.
For the people who pass him now in throngs
Will welcome next winter the robin's songs.

Oh, teacher-robin, your lesson comes
With gentle power to our hearts and homes.
Have we waited patiently, brave and calm,
Singing all day in a thankful psalm,
When, slighted, unnoticed, we stood aside
For gayer birds in their hours of pride ?
I think that the wisest may learn of thee
Courage, and hope, and humility.

We, too, will rejoice in the sun and showers,
And the merry mirth of the summer hours.
We, too, will be patient, and try to wait
For our love and praise till the year grows late.

SONGS OF SUNSHINE.

It is better to help when the days are sad
Than when all things are gay and in beauty clad ;
And we thank our God, to whom all belongs,
If He gives us the part of the robin's songs.

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—————

WORK AND PRAY.

WOULD you understand the anthems,
And translate the merry glees,
That the autumn winds are singing
In their home among the trees?
Would you know what friendly summer
Lingers yet awhile to say ?
This the whisper heard for ever—
“Work and pray.”

Can you read the pencilled message
In the hearts of glowing flowers ?
Have you ears to catch the whispers
Of the swiftly passing hours ?
They but tell the same old story—
Though some lovely things decay,
This will make perpetual sunshine—
Work and pray.

There are other, graver voices
Which the listener's heart can move,
One is called the voice of sorrow,
One the tender speech of love ;
But, whate'er may be the speakers,
'Tis the same good thing they say—
Counsel, and yet benediction—
“Work and pray.”

Do not fear the cold of winter,
Make it bright if it be long ;
All autumnal mists and shadows
May be cheered by hopeful song.
Only let the hands be busy,
And the heart be glad and gay,
And each hour shall bring a blessing—
Work and pray.

Work, for life has need of helping,
Soothe some sorrow, ease some pain ;
Work, for idlers in God's vineyard
Spend their useless lives in vain.
Pray, for thought can reach the heavens,
And bring joy without delay,
While the Father gives His blessing—
Work and pray.

So the vocal winds and waters
Teach the people how to give.
Lowly ones who trust and labour,
Learn the highest life to live.
God is speaking through all nature,
And the world's grave voices say,
Unto all who wait to listen—
"Work and pray."

A SONG OF PRAISE.

(ISAIAH XII.)

THERE is some sunlight left in the blue sky,
And music in the air,
And in my heart a song serene and high
That mingles with my prayer.

The shadows have been thick upon my way,
The dead leaves lie around,
But in the silence of the darkest day
Some blessings may be found.

Hast thou been angry with me, patient King?
Thy wrath is turned away;
It is of Thy great comfort I will sing,
Through all this happy day.

Thou God of my salvation, I will trust
And will not be afraid;
Thou art my strength, O merciful and just,
I could not be dismayed.

The well of my delight is very deep,
I stay beside its brink;
I shall not need for thirst and woe to weep,
But I may rest and drink.

And, evermore, within the coming days,
My heart, with joy made strong,
Shall call upon Thy name, and for Thy praise
Shall spend itself in song.

However long and desolate the way,
Thy love shall make it bright;
Thy presence brings the joy of summer's day
Into the densest night.

And, since Thou art not angry, but in love
Dost deign to comfort me,
I will be glad, till, in Thy home above,
I aye shall dwell with Thee;

And change these halting and imperfect songs
For such as angels raise,
Nor shall one singer of the happy throngs
Give Thee more loving praise.

THE LARKS ON THE SHORE.

To the hearts that are lowly, and quick of discerning,
All things God has made have some gift of good speech,
And through the long day we may lessons be learning
Of larks that are singing their songs o'er the beach.

Their solos ring out where the wide waters glisten,
While the waves play a tender accompaniment,
And the world-weary men become calm as they listen,
For the hearts of the larks must be full of content.

They soar in the morn to enjoy the fair weather,
As soon as the sun spreads its light o'er the skies,
And pour down their songs on the moor's purple heather,
While their bliss grows the wilder the higher they rise.

They sing at noonday when the white clouds are sailing,
And through the still hours of the long afternoon ;
And when the cool winds of the eve are prevailing,
The larks have not finished their jubilant tune.

No sweeter their songs when glad crowds are applauding,
Or listening spell-bound to the exquisite strain,
Than when no response is their service rewarding,
And their most brilliant efforts no praises can gain.

They sing—or how else could they bear all the gladness?—
They sing for the joy of the beautiful earth ;
They sing, for they dream not of sighing or sadness,
They deem that their life is for pleasure and mirth.

And hearing their lays we are silent no longer !
We too will sing out through the bright summer days,
Till our hearts with our voices grow braver and stronger,
And we love with devotion the God whom we praise.

SONGS OF SUNSHINE.

nd we thank the great Father whose kindness is giving
The brightness and joy of the ocean once more,
nd teaching us how to be happily living
By hearing the songs of the larks on the shore.

ONE OF THE CROWD.

they that had eaten were about five thousand men, *besides women and children.*"—MATTHEW.

THE morning sun shone brightly on the waves,
The dancing waves of our blue Galilee,
And turned them all to silver. Where I stood,
The shining waters crept about my feet,
Making glad-music, as from some light heart,
That God had blessed with unexpected joy,
And filled to overflowing. On the strand
My dark-eyed children played in merry glee,
The while their heads grew fair with golden light,
And all the world was happy. Strange it seemed
That as I looked at them my eyes were filled
With sad swift tears. I could but chide myself,
Since, into my fair home beside the lake,
Nor want, nor woe had come to make me weep ;
And only that my heart was not at rest,
And only that my sins were not forgiven,
And only that my soul had deeper wants
Than human love could satisfy, my lot
Would have been bright indeed. My husband's love
Was strong and tender, and my little ones
Gathered about my knees with loving looks
And fond caresses. But of late my heart
Was deeply stirred by One who sometimes came
To walk beside the water, and who once
Had lifted His grave eyes and looked at me.

Some said He was the Christ. I thought He was,
For none beside could have such wondrous power
To move the spirit. 'Twas of Him I thought
That morning by the Sea of Galilee ;
When suddenly I saw the gleaming sails
Of a small ship upon the waves, and knew
That He was in it. Then I heard a sound
Louder than waters, and a running crowd
Of people thronged me, and a voice I knew
Called to me eagerly, "Come, hasten on ;
The Master goes into the wilderness,
And we will follow."

Joyously I called
My children to me, and we hurried on
Over the narrow pathway till we came
Unto the desert place where Jesus was.

Short space to mourn His friend the Saviour craved ;
For, at the fancy of a dancing girl,
The King had stilled for ever the brave voice
Of John the preacher, and the Lord had come
To be apart with God, and with His grief.

We thronged about Him. The young men came first,
And next the women and the little ones,
And then the sick folk, carried by their friends,
And last the old men came.

I scarcely dared
To venture near Him. Was it right, I thought,
To break upon His solitude ? Perchance
He would rebuke us, sending us away
To our now distant homes. But presently
He turned His face towards us, and it seemed
He read our longings and was comforted.
He smiled upon us, and His searching eyes
Read all our faces. "I have come, O Lord ;
I could not stay away," mine said for me,

And then He spoke to us. We hushed our breath
And drank His words, and worshipped with our hearts.
None was afraid of Him. I felt the hands
Of my dear children drawing me away
Where they could touch His feet. The beggars came
And stood as near to Him as those who wore
The silken robe. But it was wonderful
How, while we listened, peace and gladness stole
Into our spirits. Flashing eyes grew meek ;
Proud voices learned new music ; restless hearts
Grew still and satisfied with His great love.
All day He talked to us. We noted not
The passing of the hours. We scarcely heard
The chorus of the birds. We knew they sang,
But the great sweetness of the Master's voice
Filled us so utterly, we did not need
The other music. For we learned that day
That all the weary hearts in our sad world
Had but to come to Him, and they should rest
In Him for ever.

Presently He ceased ;
And then, made bold by His most gracious smile,
The sick drew near to Him. Few words they spoke,
Their sorrows pleaded for them, and His hand
Restored them one by one. The leper came
And went away with flesh made clean again.
The lame limped to Him, and returned from Him
Leaping for joy. The blind eyes looked at Him,
And then to the green hills, and laughing lake,
And filled with happy tears. The faint heart
Bounded with joy. And every thankful lip
Uttered His praises. So the Lord forgot
His grief, and made us happy.

But at length
The gloaming came. The golden sunset dyed
The rippling waters, and the shadows crept
About the hills, and robed them for the night.

Then we were hungry. Hitherto the joy
Of the dear Master's presence kept us still,
With happy thoughts of Him. But now there came
A faintness o'er us ; and the children cried,
And we began to think of home once more,
Although we fain would stay with Christ the Lord,
Nor leave His side for ever.

Then we saw
The friends of Jesus whisper, " Send away
The multitude, for now the time is past ;
Let them go forth into the villages
And buy their food." With kindly smiling eyes
The Master looked upon us. " Nay," He said,
" They need not go away ; give them to eat."
" Two fishes and five loaves are all we have."
And looking out upon the waiting crowd
And at their scanty food, they said, " Shall we
Go buy for them ?" But, with a look of love,
The Master bade the multitude sit down
On the green grass, and then He took the loaves,
And blessed them, lifting up His eyes to heaven.

Oh, what a happy feast we had that day !
The Saviour supped with us ; and as we ate,
Our hearts were filled with satisfying love,
And all the longing and the wild unrest
Were stilled for ever. There was not an eye
But sparkled with glad joy, nor any voice
But sang its praises to the Almighty King
Who made the earth the table of the Lord
Where souls were fed that day.

The darkness came ;
Dew fell upon the children's glossy curls,
And they had found their father in the crowd
When we prepared to go. One parting look
The Master gave to me and my beloved ;

And then we went together by the lake,
Holding the children's hands. We needed not
To tell each other all that we had found ;
We knew that light and joy and perfect peace
Went with us to our home, for Christ was there ;
And though we nevermore might see His face,
We knew that He would bless us in the way
From earth to Paradise, for those whom He
Has satisfied with living bread from heaven
Shall never thirst and never hunger more.

THE LAST HYMN.

THE Sabbath day was ending in a village by the sea,
The uttered benediction touched the people tenderly ;
And they rose to face the sunset in the glowing, lighted west,
And then hastened to their dwellings for God's blessed boon of rest.

But they looked across the waters, and a storm was raging there ;
A fierce spirit moved above them—the wild spirit of the air ;
And it lashed and shook and tore them till they thundered,
groaned, and boomed,
And alas ! for any vessel in their yawning gulfs entombed !

Very anxious were the people on that rocky coast of Wales
Lest the dawn of coming morrows should be telling awful tales,
When the sea had spent its passion, and should cast upon the shore
Bits of wreck, and swollen victims, as it had done heretofore.

With the rough winds blowing round her, a brave woman strained
her eyes,
And she saw among the billows a large vessel fall and rise.
Oh, it did not need a prophet to tell what the end must be,
For no ship could ride in safety near that shore on such a sea.

Then the pitying people hurried from their homes, and thronged
the beach.

Oh, for power to cross the waters and the perishing to reach !
Helpless hands were wrung in sorrow, tender hearts grew cold with
dread,
And the ship, urged by the tempest, to the fatal rock-shore sped.

"She has parted in the middle! Oh, the half of her goes
down!
God have mercy! Is His heaven far to seek for those who
drown?"
Lo! when next the white, shocked faces looked with terror on the
sea,
Only one last clinging figure on a spar was seen to be.

Nearer to the trembling watchers came the wreck tossed by the
wave,
And the man still clung and floated, though no power on earth could
save!
"Could we send him a short message? Here's a trumpet—shout
away!"
'Twas the preacher's hand that took it, and he wondered what to
say.

Any memory of his sermon? "Firstly, secondly?" Ah, no!
There was but one thing to utter in that awful hour of woe;
So he shouted through the trumpet, "*Look to Jesus!* Can you
hear?"
And "Aye, aye, sir!" rang the answer o'er the waters loud and
clear.

Then they listened. "He is singing 'Jesus, lover of my soul.'"
And the winds brought back the echo, "While the nearer waters
roll."
Strange, indeed, it was to hear him, "till the storm of life was past,"
Singing bravely from the waters, "O receive my soul at last!"

He could have no other refuge. "Hangs my helpless soul on Thee ;
Leave, oh, leave me not ;" the singer dropped at last into the sea.
And the watchers, looking homeward through their eyes by tears
made dim,
Said, "He passed to be with Jesus in the singing of that hymn !"

A WHISPER.

" FEAR thou not, for I am with thee ! "
Listen to the gentle word
Borne upon the breeze of evening
From the temple of the Lord.
Cheer thee, faint one, sad and lonely,
For He speaks it unto thee :
Through the dim, untrodden journey
He will thy companion be.

" Fear thou not, for I am with thee ! "
Deeper grow the shades of night ;
Yet thou shalt not walk in darkness,
He Himself will be thy light.
At the faintest sign of danger
He will stop and take thy hand ;
He will guide thee through the mazes
Of this strange, unquiet land.

" Fear thou not, for I am with thee ! '
Sweet it is at break of day
Thus to hear the Father speaking,
" Child, arise, and haste away :
Whatsoever the hours shall bring thee,
Work to do, or pain to bear,
Meet it with strong faith and courage,
Trusting in His tender care."

" Fear thou not, for I am with thee ! "
Flowers shall bloom and birds shall sing
As thou passest through the pathway
Leading upward to the King.
Do not look for gloom and sadness,
Do not fear the shade or sun ;
God will make thee strong and happy
When His will alone is done.

" Fear thou not, for I am with thee ! "
Do not start with timid fear
From the sounding of the waters
When thy Guide shall bring thee near.
He will be thy strength and comfort,
He will bring thee to the shore
Of the bright celestial city
Where His children weep no more.

" Fear thou not, for I am with thee ! "
What hast thou to say to Him
Who in gentleness draws near thee
Through the evening calm and dim ?
" Father, I will fear no evil,
Thou art with me ; all is well ;
Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel
Till with Thee at home I dwell."

BELOVED.

BE glad in thy youth's merry morning,
Walk on in the warmth of the sun,
And sing in the midst of thy labours
Till the day with its duties is done.

But do not forget in the evening
To say in the midst of thy glee,
"It is God who is making me happy,
And some one is praying for me."

Whenever the shadows are creeping
More closely, perchance, to thy feet,
And thou standest amazed and uncertain
Where roads that are difficult meet,
And the sound as of sorrow and sighing
Comes up from the far-away sea,
Oh, never believe thou art lonely !
Say—"Some one is thinking of me."

Whenever thy matins are joyous,
And the day is as fair as 'tis long,
And the morning melts into the noontide
To the sounds of a jubilant song,
And the vespers are anthems of gladness,
So good is the Father to thee,
Think—"Love is the guerdon He gives me,
And some one rejoices with me."

If e'er thou art saddened by changes,
And hearts that have loved thee are cold,
Or if it should be that thy spirit
Preferreth the new to the old ;
And if in life's hush a misgiving
Of pain or regret comes to thee,
Oh, darling, fear not, but be happy :
Say—"Some one is faithful to me."

If e'er thou art sad with the longing
For gifts that are noble and high ;
If the thought that thy life is too meagre
Should sometimes occasion a sigh,

Remember that none can be useless
 Whose tenderness, patient and free,
 Makes hearts that were sorrowful happy :
 Think—"Some one is grateful to me."

And if it should be in the future
 That some one who loves thee should die,
 Be sure that thou art not forgotten
 In the house of the Father on high.
 And since they are rapidly filling,
 How home-like the "mansions" will be
 Where families gather together,
 And some one is watching for thee !

A LATE SUMMER.

THE sunny summer is behind her time.
 (Complainingly we speak our thoughts to-day.)
 'Tis true we sometimes hear the cuckoo's chime ;
 But we have lost the merry hours of May,
 And yet no garden's rose, no hawthorn white,
 Comes to delight our sight.

The sun, through long dark days, has veiled his face,
 The angry winds from north and east have rushed,
 And with rude hands, that knew no pity's grace,
 Have made leaves tremble, and young hopes have crushed,
 And only lowly flowers have dared to bloom
 Amid the cold and gloom.

The nightingales have sung their evening hymn,
 Sometimes, as if the frost had hurt their throats ;

The early morning skies were grey and dim,
Although the hopeful larks dropped down their notes ;
And many a growing plant has seemed to wait
For summer that is late.

And yet the bursting buds are everywhere ;
The cowslips and the blue-bells throng the banks,
Glad voices of the birds ring through the air,
And all the world is sending up its thanks ;
For field and hedgerow, growing plant and sod,
Sing, Glory be to God.

Summer is sure, although she comes so late ;
The generous sun shall cast his blessings forth,
And not an inch of ground be desolate
From the warm south unto the bleaker north ;
And glowing June, and all her sister-days,
Shall sing the summer's praise.

And we shall have our summer. Though sad eyes
Have vainly looked for joy's abundant flowers,
And turned with hope deferred from the dull skies,
We yet shall have our meed of sunny hours.
Oh ! blest shall be the quiet hearts that wait
For summer that is late.

WITHIN THE HOUSE.

"The soul is a dwelling of many apartments."—BEECHER.

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock."—CHRIST.

THERE is within my house a room
Called Hope ; and when the days begin,
There is no sign of grief or gloom,
But the fair light comes streaming in,

And all the day the song is heard,
And glowing pictures deck the walls,
And eyes are bright, and hearts are stirred,
And not a painful shadow falls,—
If Christ came in and dwelt with me,
What a glad chamber Hope would be.

There is another room ; 'tis high,
And light and peaceful, safe and warm,
To it no winter cold comes nigh,
And scarce is heard the roaring storm ;
And from its casements can be seen
Glimpses of country strangely fair,
Bright meadows clothed in gold and green,
That vanish soon amid the air.
If Christ came in, to my delight,
Faith would be changed to lasting sight.

Another room there is called Love,
Where guests come in to stay with me :
Sometimes it is like heaven above,
Filled with a wondrous ecstasy ;
And sometimes keenest pain is there,
And hearts are hurt and faces pale,
And the wild cry of sobbing prayer
Goes out to mingle with the gale.
But if the Lord dwelt there with me,
Love's chamber might the holiest be.

Some rooms there are so dark and sad,
So filled with things that are unclean,
That never there the heart is glad,
And peace and love are never seen ;
But passions wild, ambition, hate,
And greed of gain, and selfishness,
Make the whole chambers desolate,
And leave no space for blessedness.
But if the King came through the door,
Surely these rooms would be no more !

What can I do but let Him in?
Has He not waited long enough?
The numerous rooms of joy or sin,
Where light is fair or storms are rough,
Will never have a greater guest
Than He who lingers still outside.
Oh, for my gladness, peace and rest!
I open the doors and set them wide,
And bid Him welcome to my home,
With "Come, Lord Jesus, quickly come!"

JUNE.

As a friend whose fair, sweet face
We have longed to see;
As a healer, whose firm touch
Maketh pain to flee;
So she comes, the June we love,
Gliding o'er the lea.

Meadows spread their shining gold
For her dancing feet;
Cuckoo, nightingale, and lark,
Charm with music sweet;
Roses, woodbine, all the flowers
Make her home complete.

All the land is full of song
Sung in merry tune;
Hills and dales are bathed in light,
And the cloudless moon
Spreads its blazing beauty forth
To the face of June.

What has she to bring to us ?
Hands all filled with flowers ?
Glowing sunsets, moonlit nights ?
Dreamy, joyous hours ?
Vigorous thoughts, and noble work ?
Or departing powers ?

What has she to say to us ?
Merry words and glad ?
Shouts of battle fierce and strong ?
Whispers stern and sad ?
Or some mingled messages
As her sisters had ?

What has she to do for us ?
Make the pathway bright ?
Lead us to the rush and roar
Of tempestuous night ?
Or with gentle kindly hands
Bring us to the light ?

All these things are secrets yet
Hidden in her breast ;
But we know that June will be
What God sees is best :
Only let her speak of Him,
We will leave the rest.

AFTER DULL DAYS.

It was not like May while the sun hid his face ;
But as soon as he scattered the clouds in his might,
The old world was clothed in youth's beauty and grace,
And hills, vales, and meadows were radiant with light.

The chestnut bouquets were all shaking with mirth,
The tender leaves trembled with pleasure and bliss,
The daisy eyes opened to greet the day's birth,
And held up their lips for the warm rays to kiss.

The glad, golden buttercups lifted their heads,
Each yellow oak leaf turned its face to the sun,
And the orchis and fern, where the swift rabbit treads,
Whispered softly glad news, "'Tis the summer begun."

Oh, how the birds sang ! It was hard to decide
If the lark, or the thrush, or the nightingale's voice
Was the loudest and best ; but sweet sounds far and wide
Were melted together, and made us rejoice.

There was nothing but joy in God's great world of green,
And the flowers and the birds were more happy that day,
Because they so lately the dark clouds had seen,
And could laugh o'er dull days that had vanished away.

And I, too, am thankful that Infinite Love
Has chosen dark seasons to blend with my life ;
For the fair ones that follow, like gifts from above,
Shall be dearer to me for the sad times of strife.

And I shall be glad in my summer of bliss,
Which I hope to begin when these dark days shall cease,
That I was prepared in a world such as this
For a heaven all brightness and blessing and peace.

THE CHILDREN'S PSALM.

THE day was dying, the work was done,
Dim was the light in the outer street,
The dark clouds shrouded the setting sun,
And the cold winds hurried the showers of sleet ;
When the children, tired with the busy day,
And glad of the twilight's hush and calm,
Forgot for a moment the waiting play,
To say softly together their own sweet psalm.

" The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want."
Oh, little lambs, in the winter's cold,
I thought as I heard you the glad words chant,
It is well to be safe in the Saviour's fold.
" He makes me lie down in His pastures green,
By life's still waters He leadeth me."
Oh, travellers, passing to many a scene,
I am glad you will have such a guide as He!

" He restoreth my soul." If He did not so,
I should grieve to think of your coming days,
By sin made sorry and dark with woe ;
But He will teach you His songs of praise.
" He leadeth me in the paths of right
For His own name's sake." Oh, wandering feet,
If you go sometimes into shades of night,
He will bring you out where the bright ways meet.

Then I heard them speaking in tones subdued
Of the vale of the shadow. " I fear no ill,
For Thou art with me, oh ! Shepherd good,
Thy rod and staff are my comfort still."

And I thanked the King that the darksome place
Is never dark to the children's eyes,
Since they need but look in His loving face,
And rest in His arms till they reach the skies.

"Thou spread'st me a table before my foes,
My cup runneth over with glad content."
And I thought, Not one of the children knows
In what desert scenes shall her life be spent ;
But He can feed in the wilderness,
And He anoint with the oil of joy ;
And so long as the Lord will the children bless,
The words of faith may their lips employ.

Then their thoughts went on to the life before.
"Goodness and mercy shall follow me,
And evermore, till the days are o'er,
The house of the Lord my home shall be."
And I thanked the Saviour for all His love !
Oh, strangely safe in this world so wild
Are the little ones ; for, from heaven above,
He watches them, who was once a child.

The psalm was finished, the day was done,
Dim was the light in the outer street,
And the clouds were tinged with the setting sun
As the children went forward the night to meet ;
But I thought of their future with inward calm,
As the silence came after their gentle chant,
For I knew how true is the children's psalm—
The Lord *is* their Shepherd, they shall *not* want.

WHEN THE GRASS WAS GREEN.

It was the time of the happy spring,
And the flowers grew thick on the bright way-side ;
It was the time when the glad birds sing,
And joy is fresh where the hills abide :
The time when God's beautiful works are seen,
For the showers had come, and the grass was green.

There was strong young life in the growing things,
And waking hope in the hearts of men ;
Souls, captive long, breathed a prayer for wings,
And the worn and weary had strength again.
For Christ had come, and He spoke of God
In every spot which His tired feet trod.

His servants told Him of good work done,
And He took them away to a desert place
To rest awhile till the set of sun,
And read His love in their Master's face.
For a desert spot is a pleasant scene
When the Lord is there, and the grass is green.

But the people heard, and they followed fast ;
They were thirsting still for His words of love.
They had listened oft in the bright days past,
And they wished His mercy again to prove ;
And He received them, and taught and healed,
Till the Kingdom of God was once more revealed.

At length, when the day wore to eventide,
The people were hungry and faint, and He
Would not send them away from the fresh hill-side,
But fed and refreshed them fatherly ;
And that evening His wonderful power was seen,
For they rested and ate where the grass was green.

Oh, tender Master, we look to Thee,
Come, bid *us* eat of the living bread.
Thy power of healing, O let us see,
And again by Thy greatness be comforted.
Once more to-day let Thy love be seen,
For we are tired, though the grass is green.

AFTER THE STORM.

"He maketh the storm a calm."

ALL the waves were lashed to fury, and they tossed the white
spray high,
For the storm-winds struck their faces, and the lightnings from
the sky
Like fire-arrows pierced their bosoms, till they shrieked as if in
pain,
And the thunder cracked and rattled till we cried for peace again.

Clouds like angry foes were marshalled, and the armies over-
spread
The blue fields of sky above us ; while like missiles on our head
Came the showers of hitting hail-stones, and rain-torrents pouring
fast,
Till in terror and disquiet all things wished the storm were past.

Then the wind sank down in silence, and the dark clouds sped
away,
And a hush came o'er the waters tossing up the snowy spray ;
Then the sun shone out in splendour, and the world was bathed in
light,
And the birds took up their singing with a new and glad delight.

God had spoken to the waters, and the angry, raging wind
Was as gentle as the summer when He left His peace behind ;
And the land was full of music where the blinding storm had been,
And the fair blue heavens were tranquil as they looked upon the
scene.

And I learnt anew the lesson which God teaches to the sad ;
He has but a word to whisper and He makes the spirit glad ;
And the storm, and the disquiet, and the rushing wind shall cease
When He stills the angry tempest with His benison of peace.

So whene'er my heart is fearful, and the light of life is dim,
I will call upon my Saviour and will put my trust in Him ;
In the storms of sin and trouble I will sing a happy psalm
Of His power and love who maketh of the storm a perfect calm.

WON.

JOHN iv. 46—53.

“AND can I help it that I have no faith
To give this Stranger ? Many things I hear
Of wonders He has done, of gracious words
Swaying the hosts upon the mountain-side,
And that He has a marvellous power to heal.
You tell me that He woos men to His side
By gentleness and strength : that He gives rest,
Pardon, and joy. But I ? I am not tired :
My life flows pleasantly as summer streams
Between bright banks of flowers. Nor do I need
Forgiveness, since to me comes not the strife
That tempts men unto sin. I want Him not.
I see no beauty in His grave calm face

That I should e'er desire Him. I have rest
 Within my happy home, where boys and girls
 Make music all the day, where love is true,
 And plenty pours her treasures at my feet,
 And sorrow scarcely dares to show her face.
 Why should I therefore mingle with the crowd,
 That follows at His call from morn to night?
 One of the people is this Nazarene?
 Then let the people hear Him. Till I see
 Great signs and wonders, I will not believe
 In Christ the carpenter!"

There came a day
 When, uninvited, to the mansion came
 A guest whom no one welcomed, and he touched
 The merry eyes and laughter-loving lips
 Of a bright boy, the nobleman's dear son.
 And then a shadow fell upon the home,
 And joy died out from all the spacious rooms,
 And there was no more heard the gladsome songs
 Of mirth.

"Jesus of Nazareth has come
 Out of Judea into Galilee,"
 One told the nobleman. A strange, sweet hope
 Sprang into being at the friendly words,
 And in quick haste he went to seek the Lord.
 He met Him in the way, and in His face
 He saw Divine compassion.

"Come," said he,
 "And heal my son, for he is sick to death.
 No time is to be lost. He lieth faint
 Amid the shadows. Hasten to his side,
 And make him whole!"

The Master looked and smiled.
 "Except ye see great signs and wonders wrought,
 Ye never will believe," said He.

The man,
 Impatient of delay, who bent not yet
 His knee before the Lord, to learn of Him,

Who had no leisure in his anxious soul
To think of faith, said, in love-trembling tones,
"Sir, hasten down, before my child shall die."

And did the Lord refuse the boon he asked
Till he believed? Nay, the full father's heart
Was open to His ken. He saw the love
That surged and leaped and agonised in prayer
For his beloved, and pitied him the while.
"Oh, go thy way," He said, "thy darling lives,
And waits thy coming!"

Now the faith grew strong :
The nobleman believed the Master's word,
And hastened joyfully along the way,
Trusting in Jesus ! As he went he saw
His servants, and they brought glad news to him :
"Thy son recovers." "When did he begin
To amend?" he asked. "About the seventh hour
The fever left him." And the father knew
'Twas when the Healer spoke the word of life
His boy was saved. "And he himself believed,
And his whole house."

Oh, patient Son of God,
'Tis thus reluctant hearts are won by Thee !
We have but little faith, and tell Thee so,
And Thou dost give to us no cold reply,
But by the miracle of Thy great love
Dost draw our very souls unto Thyself,
Until we crown Thee Healer, Saviour, King !

A SABBATH OF SONG.

A LIGHT that at first was all timid and tender
Stole solemnly, silently, up from the east,
Then suddenly bathed the whole world in its splendour,
And all things awoke to the joy of a feast ;
For the Sabbath was given
As a love-sign from heaven.

And first to begin their responsive praise-singing
Were twittering sparrows, that opened their eyes
To see how the dawn its first faint light was flinging
Across the green earth from the deepening skies.
And they sang, " God is good,
He will give us our food."

With a kiss the sun greeted the land and the ocean,
And swift calls to matins rang out through the air,
The glad birds assembled in happy devotion,
And sang their thanksgivings, too joyous for prayer ;
For they felt God's great love
Coming down from above.

So the cuckoos and nightingales joined with the thrushes,
And concerts were held in the heart of the wood,
And a praise-song was warbled in reeds and in rushes,
While the lark carried his as high up as he could ;
For the blue skies were fair,
And the Father was there.

And the hours passed divinely, till, slowly awaking,
The people, refreshed by calm sleep, rose in throngs,
And when birds grew silent, were thankfully taking
Their part in the great manifesto of songs ;
For June Sabbaths are blest
With joy, sunshine, and rest.

And soon, through long aisles, the deep organs were pealing,
And great congregations were joining to sing,
With voices triumphant, and hearts full of feeling,
The song universal of praise to the King ;
And the children's acclaim
Lavished praise on His name.

So the day wore away until vespers came faintly,
From homes or from temples where hearts had grown calm ;
And birds woke the echoes, and breezes sang quaintly,
And all things took part in the grand closing psalm,
"Thank God for His rest,
And our home on His breast."

THE CHILDREN'S HOLIDAY.

ONE day in the year for the joy of the meadows !
So the children have counted the bright, sunny hours,
And thought of blue skies, and of cool, spreading shadows,
And dreamed of the homes of the plentiful flowers.

At last the day comes, and, with eager endeavour,
They rise with the sun, and look forth on the morn.
Oh, would that these pleasures might last on for ever,
Nor fade like the poppies that brighten the corn !

With kind, loving friends, who are glad in their gladness,
They joyously pass from the hot towns away ;
And the children, whose lives are oft shaded by sadness,
Forget all their griefs in the fun of their play.

They dance with the leaves, and they join in the singing ;
They gather the flowers, and are gay as the birds ;
And the forests are vocal, with grateful songs ringing,
And thoughts full of rapture are poured into words.

And the children rejoice in the love of the Father
Who makes the birds sing and the pleasant flowers smile ;
And they lift up their eyes to His heaven as they gather,
And are full of content and of peace for awhile.

So they pass their one holiday, glad to discover
The beauties and wonders that lie on the slopes ;
And they will not forget, when the pleasure is over,
The joy that was given as the crown of their hopes.

So the holiday comes in the form of a blessing,
And its freshness shall linger in long, coming years,
When in scenes that are sad and in sorrow depressing,
The eyes that now smile shall be dim with hot tears.

One day in the year for the joy of the meadows !
God grant to all children a few sunny hours
To see the blue skies, and the soft, cooling shadows,
And rest in the homes of His plentiful flowers.

THE SONG OF THE IVY.

I AM but an ivy : no strength have I
To lift up my head to the far blue sky ;
I never could stand in the world alone ;
If thou wert removed, I should soon fall prone ;
But He who cares for all needy things,
And knows the source whence the life-joy springs,
Has given me thee, O stately tree,
And thankfully, gladly, I cling to thee.

I cannot do much, I can only cling,
But *thou* makest a home where the bright birds sing,
Thy boughs are broad where the squirrels play,
And the warm light kisses thee all the day ;

The weary rest in thy pleasant shade,
And they love the shelter thy leaves have made ;
I hear them praise thee, O brave, strong tree ;
The while I but silently cling to thee.

Thy sphere is large, thou canst scarcely care
That an ivy is trying to make thee fair ;
Thou art doing, enjoying, and seeing much—
Art thou really aware of the ivy's touch ?
But I care not thy secrets to find and read,
Thou giv'st me the joy and the strength I need,
And now and then bendest thy head to see
How closely and fondly I cling to thee.

I cling to thee in the glorious prime
And the boundless wealth of the summer time ;
I joy in thy joy when the world is gay,
And nature is keeping her holiday ;
When the corn is waving about thy feet,
And the sweet birds twitter their mates to greet,
And the bright sun silvers the flashing sea,
Till it laughs for gladness, I cling to thee.

I cling to thee in autumnal days,
When the leaves are brown in the forest ways,
And the time of the singing of birds is past,
And a sigh of sorrow is in the blast ;
When friends forsake thee and pleasures die,
And black cloud-mountains are in the sky,
And we think of the storms that are to be,
I fear them not, for I cling to thee.

I cling to thee when the year is old,
And thy branches shrink at the touch of cold ;
I keep thee green when thy leaves are dead,
I stretch my arms to thy breeze-bowed head,
I clasp thee fast when the storm is strong,
And the north wind whistles its warlike song ;
I teach them how faithful a friend can be,
For all the winter I cling to thee.

I cling to thee when the spring comes round,
And the warm rain softens the frozen ground,
When the violets bring thee their sweets to smell,
And the cuckoo tells thee that all is well,
And the truant swallow and nightingale
Come home to thee from the southern vale ;
But I laugh as I think there is only me
Through all weathers and seasons to cling to thee.

So we grow together, my tree and I,
And we teach this lesson to passers-by—
That the sweetest of all earth's lovely things
Are protecting love and the love that clings.
They have a friend who is kind and strong,
Will shelter them ever, has loved them long ;
Through shade and sunshine He true will be,—
While they cling to Him as I cling to thee.

"WE PREACH CHRIST CRUCIFIED."

Of all the words upon the sacred pages
Few more than these have noble hearts inspired,
For Christian workers of all times and ages
Saying them over, have at once desired
To feel with Paul, and, standing at his side,
Say, with glad joy, "We preach Christ crucified."

Again to-day the old familiar story
Rings through all lands where hearts that love Him beat,
Where happy servants find their highest glory
In casting down their crowns before His feet ;
He is their Saviour, Master, Friend, and King,
And so it is one song they love to sing.

" *We* preach Christ crucified. Whatever others
Choose as their theme, our song is still the same.
We walk together as a host of brothers,
And find our greatest joy in Jesus' name,
And though the strangers may our hope despise,
Still do we raise to Him our trustful eyes.

" We *preach* Christ crucified. We lift our voices
So that the listeners standing by may hear.
It is our bliss to think that He rejoices
When we have brought some weary wanderer near ;
And by our life, as well as spoken word,
We would proclaim the goodness of our Lord.

" We preach *Christ* crucified. A Saviour tender
To bless the children, and to save, is He,
And unto Him our hearts and lives we render,
For He alone has made His people free.
There is no friend like Him, no light to shine
Upon the world like His, the light Divine.

" We preach Christ *crucified*. To-day we glory
Like men of old, and, clinging to the cross,
We but rehearse again the ancient story
Of counting all things else but pain and loss,
And gladly spread the news both near and wide,
All may be saved, for Christ is *crucified*."

Such is the song that happy hosts are singing,
And never shall the echoes die away,
Until the Christ His multitudes is bringing
Into the regions of eternal day.
Nay, even then, the myriads at His side
Will know that they are there because *He died*.

LONG AGO.

It was the season of a solemn feast,
And the calm sun shone brightly down and touched
The beautiful city with its gleaming gates
And splendid temple. But the worshippers,
Although they gathered in the sacred fane,
And knew the spotless lamb was offered up,
Had hearts too full of strife to think of peace,
Too sad to dream of joy, too pressed with fear
To hope for better days. They had known nought
But hunger, misery, and deadly fights
For many weary months. Within the walls
Of Salem had been heard the shrieks of pain,
The groans of dying men throughout long nights,
And the wild sobs of Rachels, weeping tears,
Wrung from their broken hearts because of babes
Torn from their bosoms.

But the feast had come.
And would not peace come with it? Nay, the doom
Foretold by prophets would make desolate
The temple, and the city, and all hearts
That loved Jerusalem. Did not the star,
Sword-shaped hang over it? And in the clouds
Were there not armies, troops, and chariots?
And in the nights when people were asleep
Did not a haunting voice sound through the street,
"A voice against the bridegrooms and the brides,
A voice against Jerusalem ; against
The holy house, and all the people here,
A voice from east and west, and the four winds
Of heaven, Woe to Jerusalem the great,
And to the holy house, and woe to all

The people"? Did these speak of peace and joy?
 Was not the Roman army round the walls?
 And were not horrors, such as chilled the heart,
 Transacted by the rivals and their foes
 Within the city?

'Twas no feast of joy,
 For people died of hunger. To the fight
 Men rushed, although the Sabbath had not passed,
 And everywhere mad cries of hate and woe
 Rang through the streets. Days came and went,
 And each was but a messenger of grief,
 Bringing new sorrows. Through the direful hours
 The pangs of hunger raged; women forgot
 The motherhood within them; and men's hearts
 Were flesh no longer, but seemed turned to stone.
 Then the besiegers o'er the heaps of slain
 Pressed closely to the city. Titus spoke:
 "Set fire," said he, "unto the temple gates."
 And soon the flames crept round the silver work,
 And wood and cloisters perished in the fire.
 "Oh, spare the sanctuary!" the Roman cried;
 But with a firebrand rushed a soldier in,
 And soon the holy place was filled with flame,
 And thousands of the women hiding there,
 And little children, and the aged men
 Perished together, while with swift, sure hands
 The city was laid low.

Did they not think—
 The men who died by thousands in the fray—
 Slain basely by a brother's hand, or killed
 By hunger, of the day of grace passed by,
 When the Rejected, on Mount Olivet,
 Looked through His tears upon the stately halls
 And uttered His lament—"Jerusalem,
 How oft would I have gathered to My heart
 Thy children, even as a mother hen
 Gathers her chickens underneath her wings,

And ye would not. Jerusalem, behold,
Your house is left unto you desolate" ?

Perhaps at last, when they had drunk the woe,
The breaking hearts relented. Who shall say
But that the cry which they so lately heard,
"O Lord, remember me !" rang out again
At the eleventh hour of many lives
Which at the last found mercy ?

Who shall say,
But that to-day from burning villages
And reeking battle-fields where earthly hopes
Are quenched in darkness, the same cry goes forth,
"O Lord, remember me" ? But God forbid
That we should only seek the loving Friend
When war and famine drive us to His feet.

WE SHALL SEE HIM AS HE IS.

We shall see Him as He is !
Sweeter promise is there none
Than is given us in this,
For Christ's friends to think upon !
Though we walk in darkness here,
With the fogs about our face,
All the mists will disappear
When we gain our resting-place.

We shall see Him as He is !
And Himself will be the light
In the home of perfect bliss,
Where the day shall have no night.

The clear shining of our Sun
Will make summer evermore,
When the journey's end is won,
And the stormy days are o'er.

We shall see Him as He is !
Who shall say what it will be
Thus to know what Jesus is,
And His glorious face to see ?
We shall stand in glad amaze
At His beauty and His grace,
Finding it is heaven to gaze,
As we will, at Jesus' face.

We shall see Him as He is,
And be like Him ! Who can tell
What the Saviour's purpose is,
For the friends He loveth well ?
We but know in part to-day ;
We shall know as we are known,
When He summons us away
To our places by His throne.

We shall see Him as He is !
Shall we all be there at last ?
It would grieve our hearts to miss
Dear ones, when this life is past.
Oh, that all may hear His voice,
And partake the heavenly bliss !
They shall evermore rejoice,
Who will see Him as He is !

A BUSY WORLD.

THERE is not a moment to lose to-day,
So the sun is up betimes,
And the birds cannot sleep when the dawn comes in,
But must join in the morning chimes.
The sparrows all twitter, the lark soars high,
And the cuckoo begins its call,
And the nightingale trilling her tender song
Rises above them all.

Is there not something for me to sing
As well as the joyous bird ?
My voice is not mellow, nor strong, nor sweet,
But the lowlier songs are heard.
I love my Father, and I would praise
His love that is mine for aye,
And the world shall join in my song of joy,
Hearing the words I say.

The woods are yellow with primrose gems,
And sweet with the cowslips' scent ;
The blue-bells sing softly in every breeze,
Where the marigold's wealth is spent ;
The trees are busy with robes to make,
They are working both night and day ;
The chestnuts are covered with tender green,
And young leaves are on every spray.

And I would be busy this glad spring-time ;
Though I cannot be decked with flowers,
I can weave a garland of blossoms sweet
For the King in these sunny hours ;

I can clothe in beauty some spot of earth,
Making some dark home fair,
And the Master will teach me what else to do,
For His presence is everywhere.

All things are growing this bright spring day,
The corn plants are strong and green,
There is diligent life in the pleasant fields
Where hereafter the poor shall glean.
The trees are shedding their summer snow
Of blossoms that lived, and die ;
And fruit shall ripen, and harvest come
Under the autumn sky.

And I would be growing and working on
For my harvest that soon shall be ;
I covet the sun of my Father's smile
To strengthen and ripen me.
I know He will look on His fields ere long,
When the summer is rich in leaves ;
So I will be busy, and win for Him
An autumn of plenteous sheaves.

TIME TO REST.

“ And Jesus said, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest awhile.”—MARK vi. 31.

BUT we are busy, Lord ! It is the spring,
And showers have fallen on the fertile land,
And eager life throbs in each growing thing,
And work is waiting for the willing hand.

How can we rest who have Thy vines to trim
That fruit for Thee may meet the sun's bright smile?
Must we not labour till the day is dim?
How can we spare the time to rest awhile?

It is the summer in Thy world, O Lord,
And everywhere the fields are harvest white;
Vast crowds are waiting to receive Thy word,
And pitiful, blind eyes ask for Thy light.
We know, for Thou hast taught us, how the sad,
Coming to Thee, with life and light are blest.
Shall we not go to them and make them glad?
Is this the time for us to be at rest?

Even the children lift their hands to Thee,
And silver-crownèd heads to Thee bend low,
Earth-fettered men are longing to be free,
And burdened women sigh Thy rest to know.
The sounds of many prayers are in our ears,
And groans are breathed from many a laden heart;
Beseeching eyes look up through mists of tears;
And canst Thou spare us now to go apart?

Master, forgive us! We can hear Thee say
The world will still move on, though we should rest;
Thy work is pressing forward day by day,
Crowds find their way to Thee, and Thou dost bless.
Thou hast relays of soldiers in reserve,
And guides for pilgrim-feet at every mile,
And willing workers who will gladly serve,
Though we should come apart to rest awhile.

And Thou hast seen that we are very tired,
Bearing the burden and the heat of day.
Lord, we have striven, and laboured, and desired
Only to find the crown still far away

And now, with feverish pulse and throbbing head,
We meet our tasks. O Lord, Thou knowest best!
It is in tender mercy Thou hast said,
We are to come apart and take our rest.

Only we pray that in the desert place,
Where'er it be, Thou wilt with us abide,
And let us for refreshing see Thy face,
And find repose and gladness at Thy side;
And when we are less weary, let us be
Thy servants still, working beneath Thy smile;
For, gracious Master, we, for love of Thee,
Are glad our rest is only for awhile.

A ROUGH SEA.

LAST night in the hour of gloaming, the waters were still and calm,
And it seemed that they only whispered God's praise in a peaceful
psalm,
And we felt, as we sang beside them the words of our evensong,
That if life were like seas in summer we could wish that it lasted
long.

So softly the small waves rippled, just kissing the pebbled shore,
And passing away in silence as if to return no more;
So gently the water murmured with pleasures that did not cease,
That it brought to the weary spirit a dream that was full of peace

How gladly the little children came to its side in play;
And the sick, and the worn, and aged rested through all the day;
And those who were tried and tempted were hushed by its song to
sleep,
And some who were sorrow-stricken, watching, forgot to weep.

But to-day it is vexed and angry, tossing afar its foam,
And driving the shrieking sea-birds away to their rocky home ;
It seems to be mad with passion as wildly its white waves go,
And it comes to the shore in tumult, sighing as if for woe.

It tosses the boats upon it high in the mighty waves,
Then draws them among its waters to the mouths of its darkened
caves ;
It is wroth, and it has no pity for the hearts or the lives of men,
And many a brave young sailor will never come home again.

And I think, as I watch the ocean so changed from its sunny rest,
It is but a life-like picture, happy, and then distrest ;
Joyous and bright as summer, then wild with the tempest's might,
Glad as the day at morning, then dark as the blackest night.

But I know of a peaceful haven away on a lighted shore,
Where never the tempest rises, and sorrow and night are o'er ;
And to-day as I watch the billows, this is my earnest prayer,
" Father, send storm or quiet, if at last Thou wilt bring me there."

A PEACE-MAKER.

AN INCIDENT IN THE LIFE OF DAVID.

THE men were busy with the sheep, and the merry laugh rang out
As the wool was laid in plenteous heaps on the grass-ways round
about,
When a stranger, with his followers, drew near the pleasant scene,
And heard the festive shout of joy and the songs that rose between.

He chose ten men of youth and strength : " Go to the master, now,
And say, Peace be to thee and thine, and strong and glad be thou ;
And bid us to thy festival, for thy men and mine are friends,
Let us find favour in thy sight till the good sheep-shearing ends."

The young men took the message, and they waited hopefully,
After their journey they desired his hospitality ;
But the churlish Nabal darkly frowned, and angrily he said,
“ It is in vain you come to me for water and for bread.

“ And who is David, Jesse’s son, that he should send to me ?
For many servants, now-a-days, that break away there be
From masters whom they ought to serve. The flesh that I have
killed
Is not for strangers, but my men, that they may all be filled.”

So the young men turned and went away with the answer he had
sent,
And they told how Nabal had been wroth, and rude, and violent ;
And soon as David heard the tale, he suddenly arose,
And cried, “ Take every man his sword, and we will slay our foes.”

A woman, beautiful and wise, listened with whitened face,
While the servant told his mistress of her husband’s lack of
grace :—

“ The men were very good to us ; they helped with willing hand,
And guarded us both night and day, and did not hurt the land ;

“ Now, therefore, think what can be done. The master’s rage
was great,
And evil is determined that shall leave thee desolate.
He is a son of Belial, and no man can speak to him ;
And David and his men will come before the day is dim.”

Then Abigail made haste, and took two hundred loaves of bread,
With sheep and wine and raisins, and the way she swiftly led,
Till she met the brave procession of David and his friends,
When she bowed herself upon her face, and strove to make amends.

“ I pray, my lord, give audience. Let the iniquity
Of Nabal—rightly named indeed—rest only upon me.
I did not see my lord’s young men ; but now a gift I bring,
And God has sent me unto thee to keep thee from this thing.

"The Lord will bless thee surely in the happy days to be,
And when He does the good that He has spoken unto thee,
And thou art Israel's ruler, it will give thee no offence
That thou hast kept from shedding blood to gain the recompense."

The anger died in David's heart. "Blessed be thou," said he,
"Blessed be Israel's God who sent thee here to speak to me ;
And blessed be thy good advice that has kept back my hand
From shedding blood. Now go in peace unto thy house and land."

So the woman went upon her way with a glad and grateful heart ;
Had she not well performed that day a woman's noblest part ?
By skill and courtesy and love she had made strife to cease,
And brought into a good man's heart the blessed angel Peace.

A MORNING OF ANTICIPATION.

"To-morrow the Lord will do wonders among you."—JOSHUA.

THE sea was like burnished silver, and summer was in the air,
When crowds of the Father's children went up to His house of
prayer ;
And we looked for a special message, a promise of joy and peace
To come to our longing spirits, ere the week at His feet should
cease.

And this was the word He sent us, "To-morrow the Lord will do
Wonders many and mighty, e'en in the midst of you ;
And the gladness of consecration filling your hearts to-day,
Is a sign that the promised blessing is truly upon its way."

So we asked of our hearts that morning, What is it the Lord will do ?
Wonders, indeed ! He will lead us the difficult river through ;
We shall stand in the land of Canaan, and its riches of joy and
light
Shall be to us like the sunrise of the day that will have no night.

And when will He do these wonders? To-morrow? Nay, e'en
to-day,
From our hearts He will take the burden, and the mists from our
eyes away ;
He will tell us the blessed secret that keepeth the spirit calm,
And how to be ever singing the words of a trustful psalm.

But where will He do these wonders? Among us? Oh, better
still,
Within us the Master worketh, teaching His holy will.
And how deeply we craved that blessing only His eyes could see,
And He only could hear the whisper, "My Father, bless even me."

So the preacher who brought the promise filled us with hope
that day,
And down through the week of blessing we joyously took our way ;
It led us across the river, it told us of sins forgiven,
And we found that the Saviour's presence changes the earth to
heaven.

A NAME.

"That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow."

THERE is a name so passing sweet
That child-lips utter it with smiles,
And it the weary heart beguiles,
And all deep thoughts together meet,
When it is spoken at His feet.

The name is uttered everywhere—
By stalwart men who cut the corn,
By youths who sing at early morn,
By women bowed with pain and care,
And children in their twilight prayer.

I stand beside the summer sea,
And boats glide o'er its silver breast,
And from the sailor seeking rest
A pleasant song steals out to me
That tells His love on Calvary.

In parks and groves where hosts recline,
Free from the city's dust and din,
Away from sights and sounds of sin,
Where hearts grow strong on Nature's wine,
Glad voices speak that name Divine.

And crowds of happy girls and boys
Sing out brave songs of trust in Him,
And say that when their lives are dim,
And they shall care no more for toys,
And silence comes instead of noise,—

That name of love shall ever be
The sweetest music earth can bring,
And they will trust Him while they sing,
Though life be dark and they can see
No lights of hope across the sea.

And even in the working-place,
Where busy labourers toil all day,
And quick feet walk the well-worn way,
Sweet tales are told of Jesus' grace,
And tired eyes long to seek His face.

And so the Name that evermore
Has charmed sad hearts and made the light,
And brought the daybreak to life's night,
Is dearer even than before
To us who tread life's pathway o'er.

And we who pray with one accord,
That His dear name be loved and known,
Are glad with hope ; for He alone
Can bless the people with a word,—
And soon shall all men own Him Lord.

REST TIME.

FOLD the work away, my darling,
For the day is at its close,
And the hours of active labour
Should bring moments of repose.
Let the weary hands be idle,
And the tired heart cease to care,
And joy reign above our fireside
Till the time of evening prayer.

All anxiety and sorrow
May be laid aside to-night,
Though they come again to-morrow
With the dawning of the light.
'Tis enough to know this evening
That the work has all been done,
And an hour or two of pleasure
Are by honest toiling won.

Get the books that bring us solace,
Sing some tender, soothing song ;
Let the music-notes be joyous
As the measure moves along ;
And our thoughts shall rise to heaven
In thanksgiving for the day,
And glad praises to the Father,
Who has blessed us in the way.


And to us the quiet evening
Shall be like an earnest given
Of the deeper rest and quiet
Of the Father's house in heaven ;
And while now we rest together,
God the Spirit will prepare
Hearts a-weary with their waiting,
For the happy mansions there.

Fold the work away, then, darling,
Let the fingers rest awhile,
And lift up the thought to heaven,
Where the King is seen to smile.
And remember when life's evening
Brings the sunset to the west,
God, who gives the day for labour,
Gives the blessed night for rest.

THE FRIENDS WE LOVE.

AWAY we hie for a holiday !
Words are mirthful, and faces gay !
We have had our dreams of the breezy sea,
And the strong high cliffs where we soon should be ;
And now we turn from the daily task,
Since God doth give us the rest we ask ;
And there's but one sorrow to make us sigh—
It needs that we say to our friends, " Good-bye ! "

Oh, could we take them where'er we go,
The best and worst of their days to know !
Oh, could they follow with answering eyes
Our joyous glances at seas and skies !



Oh, could their presence with us crowd out
The wondering question of pain and doubt ;
For then to our time of rest were given
The brightness, peace, and delight of heaven.

They haunt our hearts in the early morn,
And speak to us in the whispering corn ;
Their faces flash in the silvered sea,
And their sighs creep into earth's harmony.
And we turn away with a thought of pain,
As we think of the places where they remain,
And our hearts go out in an anxious prayer—
" Shelter them ; bless them with Thy best care ! "

And a whisper comes from the sunny sea—
" There is joy enough both for them and thee ;
Does summer gladden one golden spot,
While the other places are all forgot ?
Dost thou think that the Father's love is small,
And, belonging to thee, is not meant for all ?
If He sends thee to-day through His flower-clad ways,
He can give them hereafter glad holidays.

" Go ; gather the sweetness of light and song ;
Thou wilt need all the strength they can give ere long.
Be learning the lessons which all things teach,
That meet thee on mountain, or moor, or beach.
God bids thee be happy. Oh, take His gift ;
Do not cling to the burden He fain would lift ;
Be sure that thy loved ones, wherever they be,
Are as dear to Him as they are to thee."

So gladly we go to our holiday,
With hearts that are trustful, and therefore gay ;
We have right to the beauty of birds and flowers,
Since the Father gives us these happy hours.

His voice is heard in the summer's smile,
"Come ye apart and rest awhile,"
He cares for our friends ; we may trust His love,
Till we're all together at home above.

MADE STRONG.

HE stooped to drink of the fountain
That sparkled beside the way,
And he lifted his heart to heaven
As he stayed for awhile to pray,
And strength from above was given ;
Then gladly he passed along
To toil again with the workers,
And lighten the task with song.

He lay on a bed of sickness,
And waited a weary while
For the hope and the expectation
That come with the Healer's smile ;
But when He had bent above him,
He had, as an answered prayer,
Not the ease that he could but covet,
But only the strength to bear.

So the Master taught him a lesson
That always His gift of strength
That comes to His faithful servants
Whenever their own is spent,
Is something to use for others,
Or bring as a gift to Him,
Not only to give them solace,
Or brighten the life grown dim.

And the sick and the weary toiler
Sat at the Master's feet,
And rested in pleasant pastures,
Finding His comfort sweet ;
Then rose to his feet rejoicing
When the Saviour had made him strong,
And, eager for love and service,
He passed to the restless throng.

And this is the tale he told them—
" The Master is good and wise,
He only can cure the sorrow,
He pities the weeping eyes.
Oh, rest in His love for ever,
Though timid and weak you be,
For He is the great strength-giver,
He giveth His strength to me."

THE LORD IS THY KEEPER.

" If I cling to the hand that is over me,
I shall be safe," I said.
" If I am leal to the mighty Friend,
I shall be comforted.
If I faithfully render all service true,
The King will be kind to me,
And at last when my share of the work is done,
His blessing shall make me free."

So I toiled and laboured from morn till night,
For how could I take my rest ?
Or fail to watch lest the foe should come
When the sunset dyed the west ?


Could I be safe if I sank to sleep,
When the shades of the night should fall ?
Would He be near to provide for me,
If I ceased on Him to call ?

And my heart was sad with a heavy care,
For I knew I should often fail ;
I shrank when the call to the battle came,
Lest the enemy would prevail ;
My courage died when the dark night fell,
And I feared to be left alone.
I had no leisure for joyous praise,
And my prayer was like a groan.

Oh, the long, long days and the dreary nights,
When I struggled the Lord to keep !
At the thought of my failures and weaknesses
What could I do but weep ?
I was not faithful, I was not good,
And my spirit forgot her song,
For I feared that the Master would tire of me,
Since I constantly did the wrong.

But a message of gladness came at last,
One day by the shining sea,
That I need not cling with my trembling hands,
For the Master was holding me.
'Tis the King who fights for the victory,
'Tis the Shepherd who tends the sheep,
And since the Lord will my Keeper be,
I have not myself to keep.

The sorrow is over, the weary strife,
I rest me in God's great love.
I know my Father will safely bring
My feet to His home above ;



I do not fear for the hidden way,
And He will forgive my sin.
The Lord is my Keeper, and He my Tower,
And I know I am safe within.

A SUMMER MESSAGE.

" Delight thyself in the Lord, and He will give thee the desire of thy heart."

Do you see how the bright green faces of the leaves of the forest
trees

Are turned to the skies above them, meeting the sun and breeze ?

Do you see how the summer rapture, making the flowers aglow,
Gently compels their sweetness to rise to the God they know ?

Can you doubt that the world is happy, kissed by the sun and
shower,

Finding a glad, new pleasure with the birth of each smiling hour ?
When the roses are brightly shining, and the gardens and fields are
bright,

Turning from earth to heaven, with its throne of golden light ?

Do you hear how the birds are singing, and think that for you they
sing ?

Oh, the anthem and glee and chorus are all for the mighty King !
They sing in the lonely coppice, they sing in the desert spot,
And they warble a glad thanksgiving for the God who forgets
them not.

Do you envy the birds their music ? Do you sigh for the smiling
flowers ?

Do you long for the joyous sunshine that comes with the summer
hours ?

Do you sigh for the sweet, wild matins sung in the early
morn,
And the rustle of rest and comfort that is heard in the breast-high
corn?

Oh, better than summer gladness, deeper than sunset's calm,
Is the message that comes in music to the words of the tender
psalm ;
It touches the heart unrestful with the power of a mother's love,
And hushes the soul to quiet in the arms of the God above.

It says you may have the pleasure and rest that your heart
desires,
It speaks of a fount of gladness quenching the passion-fires ;
It comes to the fever-stricken like the touch of a cool, kind
hand,
It brings from the storm-tossed ocean to repose in a shady land.

It is but a word ; yet a sermon, better than man could preach,
Comes like the breath of evening to all whom its power can
reach :

" Delight thyself in the Highest ; press to the Saviour's side,
And the thirst and the sad heart-hunger shall for ever be satisfied."

Then why are you ever searching for that which is always near ?
Why care for the summer music when the voice of the King
is here ?

Oh, better than flowers and sunshine, fairer than golden light,
Are the joy and the rest and rapture of those who in God delight.

ACROSS THE SEA.

LIKE a long sweet dream is the summer day,
A dream of music and love and rest ;
And I watch the waves as they gently play,
And the ships that lie on the ocean's breast,
And ask, Is there aught that can come to me
As fair as these hours by the summer sea ?

There is no strife in a world like this ;
The skies are blue and the earth is green ;
The air is soft as a mother's kiss,
And the bright birds sing for the pleasant scene,
And I gladly hasten to join their psalm
Of praise for the summer's rest and calm.

If this were all, is it not enough
While the sun shines down on the quiet sea ?
But I know how angry and wild and rough
The waves in the midst of a storm can be !
How the clouds can frown and the billows dash,
And the mighty thunders roar and crash.

And I know that the summer is swift to go,
For skies soon change and the bright flowers fade ;
And winter comes with its wind and woe,
And hearts are weary and oft dismayed ;
The birds are silent the long dark night,
And the sad and the desolate cry for light.

And I turn from this land with its waving corn,
To search for a glimpse of the other shore ;
And I think of a lovelier summer's morn,
When the rigour of winter shall come no more ;
And " This is a land that is fair," I say,
" But I choose the land where the fair things stay."

So my eyes are turned to the shining sea,
And I watch where the skies and the waters meet ;
Is it there that the home of my heart can be ?
Is it there that they walk through the golden street ?
Is it there that the tribes of the Lord shall dwell
In the brightness and beauty no tongue can tell ?

I turn my eyes to the glowing west
When the sun goes down at the close of day ;
And I say, though I know not my place of rest,
I shall reach it soon by a lighted way,
And find that fairer than land or sea
That summer morning shall be to me.

A HAPPY DAY.

“In Thy name shall they rejoice all the day.”

THERE was not a smile from the sun that day,
Nor a message of friendly grace ;
As an angry monarch he hid away
In a veil of clouds his face ;
He did not relent as the hours went by,
But scattered like tears his rain ;
And those who longed for the joy he brings
Waited and wished in vain.

There were no flowers with their faces fair
Turned upward our eyes to meet,
Or pour their scents on the heavy air,
As they danced about our feet ;

But the dead leaves fell to the sodden ground
And the roots where the ivy crept,
And the shrivelled blossoms were washed and drowned,
And it seemed that all things wept.

There was no singing of birds that day,
No anthem from happy throats,
No glad lark carolling up the heights,
No nightingale's tender notes :
But only the wind sighed drearily
Among the bereaved trees,
And only the doleful raindrops fell
In the pauses of the breeze.

But little it matters how dark the earth
How silent the world around,
If the heart within be attuned to mirth,
And if thankful thoughts abound ;
If God come near in His Father-love
There is joy in the darkest night,
For a smile of His brings the sunshine down,
And the path is bathed in light.

He came to me through the mists and clouds,
Making the dark day fair
With the thrilling thought of His tenderness
And the joy of an answered prayer ;
He drew me near to His heart of love
With the blessed word Forgiven,
He smiled the clouds of my care away,
And showed me the gate of heaven.

And now, though the winter days are near,
I look for His light to shine ;
For summer glory is round the home
That receiveth the Friend Divine :

And all the day shall my heart rejoice
In the name of the Lord I love,
Till the shadows fade from my life away,
And I dwell in His light above.

THE SAVIOUR'S WISH.

"These things I speak in the world, that they might have My joy fulfilled in themselves."

O SAVIOUR, who for love of us didst suffer grief, and shame, and wrong,
That we might walk along life's way made strong with faith, and glad with song,
And feel Thy light upon us shine ; we thank Thee for this word of Thine.

Thou wert the Man of sorrows here ; thick shadows lay across
Thy road ;
Weary and worn, a stranger form, with no fair home for Thine abode,
Thou waitedst through the darkening years, finding the world a vale of tears.

Yet wonderful, deep joy hadst Thou, for Thou couldst see the Father's face,
And wheresoe'er Thy presence was new light and glory filled the place ;
Oh, Hand that touched the child's bowed head, what hosts by Thee were comforted !

Hadst thou not joy when sickness fled ? and when the weary heart
had rest ?

When wistful women clung to Thee, and little children sought Thy
breast ?

When men possessed cried out to Thee, and Thou didst set the
prisoners free ?

Hadst Thou not joy, when by Thy death to countless happy ones
was given

Life everlasting, and a home within the Father's house in heaven ?
When man's great want had been supplied ? and love itself had
satisfied ?

Oh, Christ, we thank Thee for this gift ; we ask no greater joy
than this,

To live Thy life, and feel Thee near, to work for Thee and taste
the bliss

That comes of self-forgetful love, and hopes to dwell with Thee
above.

We pray Thee, if the world be dark, let not Thy children's hearts
be sad,

But with Thy word inspire our faith, and with Thy presence make
us glad.

Unto Thine own conform our will, and so in us Thy joy fulfil.

AFTER A ROUGH SEA.

ONLY yesterday the billows leaped aloft in furious might,
Mountain-waves they were, upheaving, as in wild, insane delight ;
They rejoiced in mad destruction, hurling all things to and fro
But to dash them without pity into seething depths below.

People with awe-stricken faces watched the mighty waves all
day,
Saw some vessels tossed and shaken, felt the blinding showers of
spray,
Saw how weak are man's endeavours, and how strong God's works
must be,
And how wonderful the Master who controls the angry sea.

But this morning its awaking is like pleasant thoughts of peace !
What has made its turbulent fury and impassioned strife to
cease ?
Little ripples stir the surface, silver sparkles light the face ;
'Tis no more a thing of terror, but of sunny joy and grace.

Surely One has spoken to it, whom the Lake of Galilee
Knew, and at whose voice its waters sank and flowed most placidly ;
He has walked across this ocean, and its roar is turned to song,
While glad crowds of happy people walk beside it and are
strong.

And the sea this lesson teaches to its scholars on the shore,—
Stormy winds and desolate seasons do not last for evermore :
After tempests and commotion comes a time of perfect peace,
When God makes the waves of sorrow from their violence to
cease.

And I take the blessed message closely to my thankful heart,
I can bear the clouds and darkness, till God says to them, Depart ;
After hours of sad depression, after gloomy days of pain,
God will make His healing sunshine break upon my life again.

TO THE END.

IT was long ago that we made our vow,
And the King stood waiting by,
And our hearts were filled with a thankfulness,
That never on earth shall die ;
For He had forgiven our many sins,
And filled us with strange new bliss—
Do you think we can ever forsake Him now,
For pleasure, or mirth like this ?

We hear the music that fain would woo
Our hearts from their resting-place ;
We see the faces that try to steal
Our eyes from the Master's face ;
And we laugh as we think how vain it is,
For how could His children love
The meaner things of the world below
Who have known the Lord above ?

We have walked with Him through the scented fields,
Where the purple violets grow ;
We have leaned on Him in our helplessness,
As we trod o'er the crisp, white snow ;
With Him we have rested in valleys green,
And have climbed the hills with Him,
And never through all the long, long years
Has the light of His love grown dim.

We love Him better the more we know
Of life, and its needs and cares,
For He comes to us ever with helping hands,
At the sound of our longing prayers ;

And what should we do when the tempests came,
And the winds and the waves were high,
And our hearts grew sick with the dread of life,
If we had not a Saviour nigh?

So we gladly re-echo the vow we made,
In the years that are long since past.
We love our King, we are His alone,
And His to the very last ;
And soon He will take us the nearer still
To His heart in His boundless love,
And teach us more of His tenderness,
At home in the land above.

Oh, ye who stay by the empty wells,
And lights that oft are dim,
Our Friend will gladly receive you. too,
If only you come to Him.
Why do you stay in the winter's cold,
Needing a home and friend ;
Since He who died for the sins of men,
Will love to the very end?

GUEST-CHAMBERS.

“ The Master saith, Where is the guest-chamber ? ”

“ OH, Master, it is here.
Come, Thou ; for we are ready. Come and stay,”
So the agreeing voices gladly say,
When He at length comes near.

Where the rich organ peals
Its thrilling notes through dimly-lighted aisles,
Lo, the crowd welcomes Him with solemn smiles,
And for His blessing kneels.

Where two or three have met
To talk of Him in some ungarnished room,
They cry, "Come, King, and cheer the evening gloom,
And do not us forget."

The children hear His voice,
And looking up into His tender face,
They say, "O Guest, come to our lowly place,
And make our hearts rejoice."

And men, white-haired and old,
Are fain to clasp His feet and keep Him near
Until the long day's shadows disappear
In the evening's sunset gold.

From dawning of life's day,
Through glowing morning and still afternoon,
And if the night shall tarry or come soon,
Behold the people pray—

"Oh, pass not, but stay here !
Behold Thine own guest-chamber ready, Lord,
Where we will gladly listen to Thy word !
Oh, to our hearts draw near."

And none shall plead in vain,
Who fain would bid Him welcome. In each place
Where faithful hearts are longing for His face,
The Master will remain.

A REVIEW.

A LONG way I have travelled, and a tried and trusty Guide
On mountains or in valleys has journeyed by my side ;
I have known the snows of winter, and the night of summer heat,
And my heart has oft been weary, and my head and way-worn
feet ;
Life has not always given the joys I thought the best,
But each day has brought its brightness, and each night has brought
its rest.

The dawn of every morning had a burden for my heart
Of pain, or care, or longing, or a difficult work-part ;
There have been times of anguish, when instead of joy and gain,
The guerdon of my labour was sharp woe and bitter pain ;
But always for my comfort, when lonely or depressed,
The day has had some brightness, and the night has had some rest.

There have been hearts to love me, and eyes to smile on me,
There have been hours of sweetness, where pleasant pastures be,
There have been quiet places where the Voice of God was heard,
And hope, and strength, and courage were given with His Word ;
And buoyantly the pathway my homeward feet have pressed,
And the day has brought its brightness, and the night has brought
its rest.

I can but sing of mercy, for God has led me on,
And I have known His kindness in all the years bygone ;
And I do not fear the future, whate'er its weal or woe,
Since He will walk beside me, wherever I may go ;
His strong arm will enfold me, His love shall make me blest,
And the day will bring its brightness, and the night will bring its
rest.

I know there lies before me a shadow of deep gloom,
The rolling of the waters, and then the silent tomb ;
The rush, and then the darkness, the gloaming, and the night,
But the Guide will stay beside me, and His smile will give me
light ;
And I will say with gladness, as I die upon His breast,
"The day has brought its brightness, and the night has brought its
rest."

TWO VOICES.

"As My Father hath sent Me into the world, even so send I you."—JESUS.

Two voices woo us. One is sweet, and comes from quiet homes
of shade
Which graceful firs, and mighty oaks, and spreading alder flowers
have made,
From valleys where the singing rills make mellow music all the day,
And where the merry mowers work, and laughing village children
play ;
And this is what the low voice says, "Come here, and list the
Master's word ;
By silent seas, in leafy glens, learn to be holy, like your Lord."

The other voice is wild and loud ; it comes with sounds of infant
cries
From where the people fill the streets with faces wan, and heavy
eyes,
Where oaths are heard instead of songs, and homes are dark with
clouds of sin,
And crowded so there seems no room for peace and joy to enter in.
And this is what the harsh voice says, "Come from the fields and
dwell with us,
And with much labour and much love fulfil the Master's mission
thus."

One voice is like a lulling song, and one like stirring martial strains ;
One calls to sunny slopes of ease, and one to bitter needs and pains ;
One speaks of John-like ecstasy, and one of Peter's ardent zeal ;
But does not that which tells of toil more of the Master's mind reveal ?
Oh, sweet are long days spent with Him, and passing sweet His gift of rest,
But to go forth as Jesus went, and work for Him methinks is best.

He came to labour, and to serve ; and we will minister to men ;
He fed the hungry, healed the sick, and made the sad heart glad again ;
He lighted lamps of hope within dark places where the light was not,
And we will lift the burdens too, nor let the weary be forgot ;
We will not, even for great joy, fail to make other hearts rejoice,
But, for the tender Master's sake, will listen to earth's pleading voice.

And He will give us hours of peace after the battle's din and strife ;
And He, when strength is failing us, will lead us to the fount of life ;
And though we dare not sing of rest, and though we long for holiness,
He gives to busy ones their meed ; those who bless others He will bless ;
And He who sends us to the world will teach us daily of His will,
And help us, where our fellows live, Christ's noblest mission to fulfil.

FROM THE CITY TO THE SEA.

THERE is white heat on the pavement, and the trodden streets are
dusty,
And I hear the constant trappings of the feet of weary men ;
There are harsh, impatient voices, in the busy hives of workers,
And almost from morn till even do they sigh for rest again.

Oh, my heart is tired of watching throbbing heads and heat-flushed
faces,
And the little children crying that they cannot even play ;
And I think with eager longing of the cool rock's plenteous shadow,
And the white waves of the ocean making music far away.

There the crowds, no longer toiling, take their ease where plashing
waters
Throw the spray upon their faces and allure them into rest ;
There the white-sailed ships are gliding, there the guillemots and
the sea gulls
Skim the heaving waters lightly ere they seek the dear home-
nest.

There the cliffs invite the weary, and the cool, refreshing breezes
Fan tired foreheads into smoothness, kiss tired lips until they
smile ;
There the grass upon the hillsides makes a bed where sweet dream-
pictures
Float before the eyes of fancy and the pleasant hours beguile.

And my heart is filled with longing as I think of all the pleasures
And the rest and the refreshment that remain in store for me,
When the working days are over, and the tasks are all completed,
And I take my summer rapture by the glorious, gladsome sea.

And I think that unto others there shall come the time of pleasure
By the blue and changing ocean, or the fields of "living green,"
When the weary shall be resting, and the troubled sing together,
As they hear the billow-music, and the soft bird-songs between.

And I joy to think that shortly not the sea alone shall greet us,
We are longing in our labour for our heavenly home of rest ;
But the days are quickly passing ; soon, the heat of summer
over,
We shall cease from all our labours. Let us wait. God's time is
best.

FELLOW-CITIZENS.

"Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens
of the saints and of the household of God."

WE meet together from every land,
From vales where the olives grow,
And some of the brotherly Christian band,
Holding out friendly and steadfast hand,
Come from the hills of snow.

We were strangers once, but our spirits rise
Whenever we chance to meet,
For we know as we look in each other's eyes,
We all are going toward the skies,
To walk in the golden street.

We find we are singing the same glad song,
Whenever the twilight dim
Stealeth our thoughts from the cares that throng,
And softens our hearts as we wait and long
For the sound of the holy hymn.

We speak of the King, and each face grows bright,
For we love Him the first and best ;
It is He who has banished the dreary night,
And brought us into the paths of light
That lead to the land of rest.

We own Him our Saviour, for He shall save
From the sin that would draw us down,
And He is our Captain, He makes us brave,
And He will bring us across the wave
And give us the victor's crown.

We are bound together by Him alone,
'Tis His blood that has made us nigh ;
And soon we shall gather before the throne,
With a song of rapture His grace to own
And shoutings of victory.

Then cheerily marching the path along,
Oh, brothers and sisters, come !
Do you see how the pilgrims the straight road throng ?
Do you hear how gladly they sing their song ?
Oh, haste to the Father's home !

SUMMER WINDS.

THEY gather the scents of the fragrant hay,
And kiss the heads of the clover,
Then playfully wander away, away,
To whisper to friend and lover.

With a gentle litter they strew the grass
With the faded leaves of the roses,
And scatter about men's feet as they pass
Their presents of summer posies.

They are up betimes in the early morn,
Setting all things in motion,
They rustle the stems of the ripening corn,
And stir the waves of the ocean.

They are rather languid and tired by noon,
But they keep the world from fainting,
While the hearts of life's singers are put in tune,
And its dreamers are fair scenes painting.

They gather strength as the day declines,
And over the hills come roaming ;
They stay to refresh the heated vines,
And shift the clouds in the gloaming.

They wander about at the dead of night,
When the kindly stars are beaming ;
They touch the children with kisses light,
And set the old men dreaming.

They fan the leaves and the grateful flowers,
And help all green things growing ;
They herald the coming of cooling showers,
After the early mowing.

And, indeed, wherever their breath is blown,
Their touch is a gift of blessing,
And men who labour and grief have known
Are cheered by their kind caressing.

And hope comes back to the timid heart,
And light to the pathway dreary,
For the summer breezes can play their part,
And comfort the worn and weary.

So let us sing to the God of Love,
For the soft wind's power of healing ;
They come from the Father-hands above,
His tender care revealing.

SUMMER SADNESS.

“O, that thou hadst hearkened unto My commandments ; then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea.”

WHY art thou wearing a face so sad,
As thou walk'st through the flower-filled ways ?
Seest thou not that the world is glad,
And long are the sunny days ?
Why art thou sighing when all things sing ?
Why grieving when all things smile ?
Oh, banish the gloom from thy heart and brow,
And be joyous a little while.

Thou canst not be happy ! I see thee stand
Where the river flows by in peace,
Or the silver sea kisses the luring land,
And the joy-songs do not cease ;
But thou hast no part in the pleasant scene,
For thy heart is not at rest ;
And thou turnest thine eyes from the lighted skies,
And thou mournest as yet unblest.

There's a message for thee in the soft cool showers,
And the meadows of gold and green ;
There are letters written on leaves and flowers
Which thine eyes have not yet seen ;
And thy Father is watching with wistful love
To see if thou wilt not pray,
With a longing look to His home above,
For His light on thine onward way.

Dost thou know the secret of all thy woe,
And why is thy life so dim ?
Thou hast chosen thy treasure in worlds below,
And wandered away from Him :


Thou hast not listened to hear His voice
In the cool of the eventide ;
Thou knowest not how their hearts rejoice
Who keep at the Father's side.

And so thou art weary, and lone, and sad,
In the light of these sunny days ;
Thou hast no comfort to make thee glad,
No pleasure to teach thee praise ;
Thy heart is burdened with heavy care,
And thou knowest no hope of rest :
Oh, weary one, far from thy Father's house,
Come home to His loving breast.

He speaks in His own kind tones of love,
Oh, why dost thou grieve Him still ?
He sends the summer to speak of Him
And teach thee His gracious will.
Thy life, like a river, shall flow in peace,
And thy spirit shall lose its pain
If thou listen to Him and obey His word,
Nor wander from Him again.

A LABOURER'S SONG.

I WORK away from the morn till night, tending the Master's
vines,
From the time when the daybreak lights the world till the time
when the eve declines ;
And the hot sun beats on my weary head, or the cool night breezes
blow,
But I must not hinder or leave the work I am doing for Him
below.



It seems sometimes, when the day is long, that I work at my task
alone,
For I listen in vain for a word of cheer, or a brave, familiar
tone ;
And I almost faint in the heat and noise, and sigh for the hour of
rest,
Till a whisper comes from my troubled soul, " He knoweth
whate'er is best."

It is very sweet in the summer's day to rest in the forest
shade,
To lie on the couches of moss and fern, and hide in the leafy
glade,
To be far away from the working world in the places where glad
birds sing,
And muse and dream of the conquerors' crowns and the palms
which the victors bring.

But the day is meant for the battle's strife, for the struggle of those
who win,
For the shout of the earnest and strong and true, whose foe is
the traitor, sin ;
For the eager gaining step by step of the rugged but home-
ward way,
For the breathless race, and the vigorous fight, and the cry of
those who pray.

So I go my way through the long day's work, God knows what is
best for me ;
I will not sigh for the cool green fields, nor the soothing song of
the sea ;
I will take the sword if He give it me, I will climb if He call
me on ;
I know there will come a time of rest when the burden and heat
are gone.

I think of the country that has no need of the summer's shine and
glare,
I know that its fields are for ever green and its hillsides always
fair ;
I shall rest by the river of life ere long, and, oh, should the Master
say,
" Well done," I shall ever be full of joy that I worked through the
summer's day.

A VOICE FROM A MARRIAGE-FEAST.

" Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it." —THE MOTHER OF JESUS.

THE sunlight fell on the people's faces,
The light of heart and the glad were there ;
Sweet maidenhood with its tender graces,
And one bright girl of them all most fair.
Brave men were there, and the royal Master,
And those who knew Him as King and Lord ;
And their cheeks grew flushed, and their hearts beat faster,
As they hushed their voices to hear His word.

Did He think at all of the dark to-morrows
Coming to Him with relentless tread ?
At a wedding-feast was the " Man of Sorrows "
Cheered and strengthened and comforted ?
He came to utter His words of blessing,
To thrill the heart of the glad young bride,
And teach the listeners closely pressing
To Him, that all might be satisfied.

A whisper passed, and the wistful mother
Said to the Master, " They have no wine ! "
The people knew Him as friend and brother,
She wanted His glory and power to shine.

He did not promise, but she, all-loving,
Read His heart, and in simple faith
Said to the servants, their fealty proving,
"Do whatever the Saviour saith."

Never before had the guests such gladness,
The wine of joy was before them poured ;
Even the sad ones lost their sadness,
To all was the joy of their youth restored.
For He who blessed when the store was failing
Gave them the joy of His love Divine,
And taught the guests, that His power prevailing,
Could change life's water to richest wine.

We do not tire of this marriage story ;
We have our feasts, and we need to-day
That Christ should come in His might and glory,
Chasing the care and the want away.
We are not satisfied ; still our praying
Goes to the Master the thick clouds through,
And still to us is the good voice saying,
"Whatsoever He tells you, do."

And so, through tears that at times will glisten,
We lift our eyes to the Master's face ;
We serve and love Him, and thus we listen
To catch the word of His mighty grace.
We pour the water and find it glowing,
But look for a feast when these days are passed ;
We do what the Master bids us, knowing
The wine of the kingdom is kept till the last.

READY FOR ACTION.

"Choose you this day whom ye will serve."

"As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

WE have chosen, and we will stand
By the choice that our hearts have made ;
We are a firm, strong band,
Whose spirits are not dismayed ;
We look at the darkening slopes
Where the foes of the Master meet,
And we talk of our earnest hopes
That ere long they shall know defeat.

We have chosen, we know our King,
Our guerdon shall be His smile,
Our trophies we'll gladly bring
To His feet in a little while.
To-day we but watch and wait
Till His summons shall move us on ;
But soon, ere the time is late,
We shall sing of a victory won.

We have chosen. Oh, men may tell
Of fields where they rather fight ;
We know we have chosen well,
For our motto is God and the right.
They say that the strife is long,
And is fought amid loss and pain,
But we answer them back in song
With a joyous and brave refrain.

We have chosen, and we abide
Wherever the Captain stays ;
We fight on the Lord's own side
In pleasant or stormy days ;

And if ever our hearts should fail,
Or the light of our faith burn dim,
Our hope will again prevail
At the sound of a word from Him.

We have chosen to scatter far
Satan and all his train ;
We fight in a holy war,
And true to the cause remain ;
And at last when the battle is o'er,
The victors shall all be crowned,
And the wrong shall be strong no more,
And the right God's throne surround.

Will you come to our ranks to-day,
O idlers, who watch us now ?
Will you win for yourselves a way,
And a life-crown for your brow ?
Oh, choose, and make God your choice,
Be faithful and true and strong ;
And in war shall your hearts rejoice,
And in battle your life be song.

AN ANTE-SONG.

“Shout, for the Lord hath given you the city.”—JOSHUA.

THE walls were wide and strong that day,
As when the host first marked their height ;
But by the pilgrim feet the way
Was trodden now ; and hearts were light,
And smiles upon their faces shone,
Who long God's mighty power had known,
And felt they were not left alone.

The sunset tinged the mountain side,
And Jordan's waters calmly flowed,
And God's great host from far and wide
Stood waiting, while their glad hearts glowed
And then rang out the leader's cry,
Whose faith was strong that God was nigh,
"Shout, He has given you victory."

And oh ! the shout that rent the air !
That shout of triumph and delight,
Like the whole world made strong with prayer,
Or all men victors in a fight,
Proclaimed the faith the people had
Who feared no shame to make them sad,
But trusting in the Lord were glad.

And, quickly, as the shout arose,
The strong walls bent and shook and fell,
And blanched the faces of the foes,
While Israel said, "God doeth well."
And every man with joy went in
To purge the city from its sin,
And glory unto God to win.

We have a city fairer far,
With sapphire walls, and streets of gold,
We know not what its glories are,
Nor guess its pleasures manifold ;
But, thinking of its happy throng,
We pilgrims often faint and long
To gain its home, and join its song.

But we are weak, its walls are high,
And we are spoiled and stained with sin ;
We travel, but we are not nigh,
How may we hope to enter in ?
Oh, shout until the air is riven,
God has to us the city given ;
Shout, we shall surely gain our heaven.

A THOUGHT OF PEACE.

I REST awhile in blue-bell ways and where the orchis blows,
And the still woodlands bring to me a dream of calm repose.
This is a place for weary heads, and the cool, caressing breeze
Comes softly here with gentle touch from the green aisles of the
trees ;
And yet I long for something more than the forest has for me ;
Oh, Jesus, King, whom most I love, I am athirst for Thee.

These sunlit glades where sweet flowers bloom have many things
to say,
The green ferns and the primroses have stirred my heart to-day,
The cuckoo's call is in the air, and the nightingale's love-song
Is heard where sunbeams glint and shine the chestnut-trees
among ;
The leaves dance on in merriest waltz, and the butterflies are
drest,
And only I am sad for sin, and moved by deep unrest.

But a text from heaven comes to me in this forest church to-day ;
There is a Friend whose mighty love can take all strife away ;
My life may be like sweet May woods for which my Father cares,
And I no longer need to weep my wild, impassioned prayers ;
These are the words that have been sent as a summer's gift to me,
"Thou keepest him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on
Thee."

Oh ! Stronghold of the human heart ; oh, Shelter from the storm !
I know the quiet resting-place where I am safe and warm ;
I know that tempests beat in vain where all Thy children hide ;
I rest me in Thy mighty love, and I am satisfied.

The storm is stilled within my heart, there is sweet rest
for me,
"Thou keepest him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on
Thee."

I trust in Thee ; I will not doubt even my safety now ;
Thy hand has washed the stains away from heart, and feet, and
brow.
Through the grey vistas of my life, I see the open gate,
And the rest I sigh for lies beyond, it will not come too late ;
I have a foretaste of it now, how good Thou art to me !
Thou keepest me in perfect peace because I rest in Thee.

SEAWARD.

Do you hear the whispering waters
Through the miles that lie between ?
Do you know how smooth the sand is
Where the plashing waves have been ?
Do you see where grow the sea-flowers ?
Do you hear the sea-gull's cry ?
Do you think of how the white cliffs
Beckon nearer to the sky ?

Oh, the leaping, gladsome billows
Are at play the whole day long ;
And they never seem weary,
For they do not cease their song ;
And they say the while they woo us
To repose upon their breast,
" If you spend the year in labour,
You have now a time of rest."

Oh, the white ships on the ocean
Catch the breezes as they ride,
And the floating tufts of seaweed
Come ashore upon the tide,
And the sunny, silvered waters
Flash their smiles back to the skies,
And at night the stars, bright golden,
Look on all with loving eyes.

Oh, the summer winds are merry
That career across the seas,
And they vex the sparkling waters,
Or caress them, as they please ;
But the ocean is not weary
Of the zephyr's gladsome play ;
It is full of light and frolic
As it tosses up its spray.

Let us leave the haunts of labour
For our rest beside the sea ;
Let us learn how bright and gladsome
Summer holidays can be ;
Let us heed the calling voices
Of the friendly winds and waves,
And instead of streets and dwellings,
Seek the hills and rocks and caves.

God will bless us with His presence,
And the summer days shall be
Like an anthem of sweet measure
Sung beside the rolling sea ;
And our hearts shall gain new courage
As we feel our Father's love,
And are brought a step the nearer
To our home of rest above.

MORN AND NIGHT.

(IN THE MORNING.)

A STRANGER comes o'er the eastern hills,
And he weareth a misty face ;
His approach is silent, and grave, and slow,
And we see not his hidden grace ;
But we know we are fain to walk with him
Away to the distant west,
Ere he take his leave and another come,
When we lay us down to rest.

What will the unknown comrade bring ?
A sword for the coming fight ?
A task our patience and faith to tax ?
A glimmer of some new light ?
Perchance he will steal from our grasp away
Some treasure we hold most dear ;
Perhaps he has gifts that are rare as gems
To show when he draweth near.

We go to meet him : we cannot tell
What he has in his silent heart ;
But our hands are ready, our eyes are clear,
We will earnestly do our part :
And we have Another, a Friend well-known,
Who will steadfastly guard our way,
So we shall not be really hurt or vexed
By the stranger whose name is To-day.

(AT NIGHT.)

In the west we linger to say good-bye,
 To the stranger, now grown a friend ;
We have found him genial, serene, and kind,
 And regret that his stay must end.
He told us secrets, he gave us joy,
 And the touch of his hand was strong ;
And we find that though sometimes he made us sigh,
 He has taught us a new glad song.

It is true that he led us through roughened ways,
 And o'er hills that were long and steep,
And at last he has taken our strength away,
 Making us wish for sleep ;
But we could not doubt that he came from Him,
 The Friend who is best of all ;
And we felt, as we followed his leading voice,
 We were heeding our Father's call.

He was but a messenger sent by Him ;
 Will he say that we used him well ?
We can but be sorry for many things
 That the day will have to tell.
And yet we have hope as we watch him pass
 Away to the brightening west ;
For the Father who gave us the day for work
 Is sending the night for rest.

LOOKING ON.

“ OH, how beautiful the leaves are ! ” Many maidens, with bright
eyes,
Looked upon the changing forests, saw with glee the golden dyes ;
But the crimsons and the scarlets and the browns among the trees
Only showed the rapid coming of the winter's roughened breeze.
All the leaves were faintly sighing that their summer lives were o'er,
When the maidens thought them lovely as they ne'er had been
before.

“ Oh, the day is grand and joyous ! see the bright clouds in the
west,”
Cried a little child with rapture. “ Evening colours are the best.
Though the morn was bright and happy, in the gloaming I can
see
That a time of merrier gladness is at hand for you and me.”
Only eyes more grave and tearful saw the tempest in the light,
And had dread of what was coming in the darkness of the night.

“ Very joyous in their playing are the children of the poor,
As they sit within the sunshine of the open cottage-door,”
So the noble lady murmured to her friend, but did not see
How the children curse each other, how they fight and disagree.
She but looked upon the surface, and her heart will never know
How young days are often clouded by earth's poverty and woe.

“ I am glad to see a people well content and without guile,
For the men gay songs are singing, and the women's faces smile.”
So the strangers sometimes judge us, but they do not see aright,
How the wrong too often triumphs o'er the weakness of the right.
For the superficial glances of but half-arrested eyes
Cannot touch the heart to feeling, cannot make the observer wise.

We look on, but without seeing all the hidden need of love,
All the prayer for summer sunshine when the clouds are dark
above ;

We can weep for open sorrow, but we do not see the joy,
And we wail sometimes when laughter should our thankful lips
employ :

Have not we the eyes that see not, and the hearts that oft mistake
When we seek to succour others, and to bless them for love's sake ?

But we know the tender Father from our home is looking on,
And He sees the silent prayings of the soul whose hope is gone ;
He is looking at the children with the sad thoughts in their eyes ;
Well He knows when wild storms gather in the clouds below the
skies.

And since He is ever looking, does it matter that we fail ?
He is watchful, strong, and loving, and His mercy must prevail.

MARY.

I SAW the Saviour die. I stood afar
With other women who had known the Lord,
And in the hour of His great agony
We saw Him smile upon us. She was there,
Who bore Him in her arms a little child,
And knew a mother's love, a mother's grief.
And she who was the wife of Zebedee
Stood by us also. We were not afraid
When the affrighted sun hid its bold face
Behind the massive clouds. But when He cried
"The work is finished," and gave up the ghost,
We wished we too could die for very woe,
So much we loved Him.

He was laid away
Within a garden, where the fresh young flowers
Grew on in quiet beauty. We forgot
His words of hope, and only wept His death ;
And life grew darker than it e'er had been,
For all the stars of hope set with that Sun,
In whom we trusted as the Christ of God.
We women kept together for a time,
In fellowship of sorrow. Where He laid
We waited, for the sacred garden-tomb
Held Him, our Friend beloved. We scarce could go
And leave Him, yet when dews of evening fell,
And the calm Sabbath-day stole on the earth,
We tore ourselves away.

The Sabbath passed,
And who shall tell how wearily we sat
Within our dwellings? But at dawn of day,
The first day of the week, when the sun rose,
We hasted to the sepulchre, and brought
Sweet spices with us to anoint the Lord.
We said among ourselves, " We are not strong,
And who shall roll the stone away ? " We came
Unto the sepulchre, and found the door
Open already, and within there sat
A shining angel. As we started back,
He spoke to us in very gentle tones—
" Be not afraid : ye seek the Crucified ;
He is not here, but risen ; come and see
The place where Jesus lay." And then he said,
" Go tell to the disciples of the Lord
That He is risen, and has gone before
To Galilee." They, trembling and amazed,
Hastened to tell the tidings. I remained.
I could not leave the place where Christ had been,
Nor could my heart receive the joyful words
The angel spoke. Oh, 'twas a cruel thing
To take away the body of the Lord !

I thought to look again upon His face,
And to His cold, pierced hands to press my lips,
Until my grief and love were satisfied !
But now I nevermore might touch His feet,
And e'en the solace of embalming Him
Was taken from me. John and Peter came.
I ran to them, and said, amid my tears,
"Oh, they have taken Him from out the tomb !
We know not where they've laid Him." And they looked
Into the empty sepulchre, and saw
The clothes of Jesus, and went sadly home.

I waited still to weep, and then I heard
The angels speaking to me. "Why dost weep?"
They said ; but when I told the reason why,
Another came, and said, "Why weepest thou?"
So blind my eyes with tears, I knew Him not,
But thought He was the gardener. "Sir," I said,
"If thou have borne Him hence, I pray thee tell
Where thou hast laid Him, and my woman's arms
Shall carry Him away." "*Mary!*" He said,
As only He could say it ; and I turned,
With eager eyes to look upon His face,
With eager lips to stoop and kiss His feet ;
And while my happy heart went out to Him,
I cried, "*My Master!*"

Do you mourn my Lord ?
I say, He is not dead. Oh, weep no more,
But come with all your sorrows and your sins,
And let Him hear some whisper of your love,
And you will find He lives for evermore !

IN THE MORNING.

(PSALM cxlii.)

My dreams are of bright waters and green hills,
Of sunny pastures sloping to the sea,
Of gladsome music by the singing rills,
And songs of birds that rise right merrily ;
And woodland mossbeds, fair with flecks of light,
And myriad wild flowers glancing into sight.

I see dear faces that I have not seen
Since last I watched them fade, as joys that drift,—
But lo ! a sudden noise where hush has been,
And dreams depart, as with a sigh I lift
The curtains of my eyes that made the gloom,
And all the busy day is in the room !

I would have waited longer if I might
Before I saw the dress I have to wear,
The tasks to occupy me till the night,
The troubles to endure, the cross to bear.
But with the dawn the common things rush in,
And I am still on earth with grief and sin. .

So weak am I, I fear to face this day
That looms so threateningly before my view ;
My spirit sinks at all the dread array
Of winding paths that I must needs pursue,
Of great or uncongenial works that wait
For me to do before the day is late.

And oh ! the noise that is about my ears,
The rush, the worry, and the din of life !
How shall I bear them ? Stay. Through all the years
That I have passed amid these scenes of strife
I aye have had a Helper, wise and strong,
To bless each day until the evensong.

I will lift up my eyes. O God, the Lord,
Cause me Thy lovingkindness now to hear ;
In Thee I trust. Oh, speak to me one word,
And let the way where I should walk appear.
Father, in mercy guide, deliver me,
Teach me Thy will. My soul cries out to Thee.

And swiftly comes the answer. Lo, " My grace
Sufficient is," " I am with Thee always."
Now I can see the shining of His face
Whose presence turns to joy the darkest days.
I will arise, and gladly go to meet
The coming hours, and spend them at His feet.

THE SILENT NIGHTINGALE.

" NIGHTINGALE, stay with me all through the summer !"
So have I cried to my friend of the spring,
Then I have listened with eager intentness
If I could hear the sweet favourite sing.

" Nightingale, nightingale, this is the weather
For songs such as thine, made all tender with love ;
The broad moor is filled with the scent of the heather,
And there is not a cloud in the blue sky above.

"The chestnuts are filling, the limes are in blossom,
The swallows are merrily skimming the lake ;
The tall, graceful corn-stems are bending with pleasure,
The whole world is glad for the summer's dear sake.

"The earth is like fairy-land, radiant with beauty,
The homes in the forest are cool in the shade,
The ferns have grown tall, and the moss couch is ready
For all who would rest from the heat of the glade.

"And the nights are all solemn, yet gladsome and tender,
The gloaming comes softly and spreads o'er the vale ;
If thou didst but sing, then the time would be perfect,
And why art thou silent, O sweet nightingale?"

The nightingale came not,—but sent me a message :
"Thou canst not have all that is good in these hours ;
The rule of this life is some sorrow, some pleasure,
Some songs and some silence, both sunshine and showers.

"Be glad and content with the full summer blessing
God sends thee in roses, and cornfields, and seas ;
And do not lament if one pleasure be absent,
But sing of His love who has given thee these."

So I take to my heart the good counsel thus given,
And joy in the pleasures God sends me in throngs ;
I cannot have all things, yet thankful and happy
I'll wait till the spring for the nightingale's songs.

YOU AND I.

You run, and you are not weary ;
I walk, and I am not faint ;
Your songs are serene and joyous,
Mine die sometimes in complaint ;
Your path is across the mountain,
But mine through the valley deep,
And oft when your laugh is loudest,
I can do naught but weep.

Yet why should we scorn each other ?
Shall I mock at your merry song ?
Or censure your love of climbing,
Because I am not as strong ?
Will you turn in impatient anger
From me when my heart is sad ?
Perhaps if we sang together
The anthem would be more glad.

You pray in the early morning,
" Guide me, O Lord, to-day ;"
Do you know that the prayer but echoes
The words that I also say ?
You are conscious of truth and honour,
And a wish to be free from blame,
You are led by a noble purpose—
May not I be the same ?

We differ perhaps in action :
You do not the things I do,
And the path where your heart is fearless
I never should dare pursue ;

But since we have asked for guidance,
Perhaps, had we clearer light,
To judge as the Master judges,
We should see that we both are right.

There's a Book that we often study :
Some things are most plain to me,
While to you there are other pages
With truths that I cannot see.
You revel in solemn music,
And aisles where the light is dim ;
I seek the Lord in the silence,
And think I may walk with Him.

Oh, friend, do you think it matters
Though we cannot agree in all,
Since we trust in the same great Saviour,
And follow where He shall call ?
We are hoping to dwell together
At last in the Father's home ;
Let us gather a little nearer,
Ere the day of the meeting come.

Let us shout " God speed " to each other
Across the dividing line,
Let us stretch out hands in the darkness
And know where a friend's eyes shine.
The world has enough of sorrow,
But perhaps it will brighter be
If we love each other a little,
As the Master loves you and me.

L A T E .

LONG is the day ere it brings the hour of closing,
Dark is the sky ere the sunset dyes the west ;
I have grown weary, and long to be reposing
Through the still night, in the calmness of deep rest.

Day has brought pain to the eyes that have been seeing
Sights sad and sorrowful ; they ache with too much light.
When may they close, and pass into that being
Which knows the labour ended, and can rest through all the
night ?

I have grown tired of the noise I have been hearing ;
Life's weary rush and bustle, and the constant talk of men ;
And a longing fills my spirit for the quiet of that shelter
Where the Saviour gives the guerdon of His blessed peace
again.

There comes to me sometimes in the midst of fog and rattle
A picture of bright glades where the sunset colours lie,
And the calm of summer twilight where the heart might sing at
even,
Its vespers in glad praises for the busy days gone by.

And I think how sweet such resting to the worn and weary worker,
Whose life-tasks are safely finished ! Will it ever be for me ?
May my hands at last be folded, while I gaze serene and thankful,
Over all these hours of striving which again shall never be ?

Ah ! I hear a voice replying, "E'en the day that is the longest
Shall look out at last through shadows to the slowly-sinking sun,
And there is no weary toiler but at length shall know the comfort
Of the grateful hour at nightfall, when he knows his work is
done."

So I say to hard-pressed brothers, Let us once again take courage,
And for yet a little longer bravely seek to do our best.
See the sun is going westward, and the shadows have grown
longer,
Lo! the blessed evening cometh, with its time for peace and
rest.

IN THE WILDERNESS.

“Tempted like as we are.”

AFTER the glory resting on the brow
Of Christ, the Son of God, there came deep gloom.

He stood with John in Jordan, and came up
Out of the water, when before His eyes
The heavens were opened, and the light shone down,
And, as a dove, the Spirit of the Lord
Lighted upon the Saviour, while a voice
Said sweetly, “Thou art My beloved Son,
In whom I am well pleased.”

Then Christ went forth
To meet the darkness and the loneliness,
The hunger and mysterious suffering
Of all the tempted ones. The Spirit led
Away into the barren wilderness,
And the obedient Saviour followed Him
Away from happy homes and merry bands
Of household friends, away from lighted streets,
And from the rosy freshness of the world,
Where little children played, and where young hearts
Beat high with hope and joy. He turned His face
Unto the desert shadows. Not for Him

The sweet, sweet talk of simple budding flowers,
And warbling of the winsome, joyous birds ;
But the unanswering silence of the night,
And barrenness and solitude were His.

For forty awful days the Son of God
Was tempted. Satan troubled Him with doubts
And base suggestions. The great enemy
Of all our souls engaged in fight with Him,
Hoping to conquer. What we feel, He felt :
He knew the shrinking pain of those whose hearts
Wonder at all the strange, dim ways of God.
He knew the faintness and the weariness,
The pitiful appeal unto the strong,
The feeling in the dark in hope to find
The firm, close clasp of a dear Father's hand ;
The sorrowful uplooking of mute eyes,
The panting of the spirit after God.
He knew the trouble, but knew not the sin.
Patient, enduring, rock-like in His strength
The Saviour stood, and gained the victory.

But Satan would not easily resign
His hope of triumph ; and the Son of God
Had fasted forty days and hungry grew.
Long years before, the manna fell from heaven,
And all the hungry hosts came from their tents
And gathered daily food for every day.
God loved His children, would not let them starve,
But sent the quails to nestle near their hands,
And bade the gentle showers of food from heaven
Fall in the desert. Yet His own dear Son
Fainted for hunger, that Himself might know
How best to help and pity all the poor
Who in this suffering world should pray to Him.
And God could watch and let no manna fall !
Oh, wonderful is He, who loves us so,
That for our sakes He let the Saviour fast !

And when the tempter came to Him, he said,
"If Thou indeed canst be the Son of God,
Command these stones that they be changed to bread."
But Jesus answered—"It is written down,
'Man shall not live alone by daily bread,
But by the bread of life, which God doth speak.'"

Satan was not yet conquered, and he took
The Saviour to the holy city then,
And set Him on the temple's pinnacle,
And spoke with sneering words to Christ the King.
"Thou art the Son of God? Then cast Thyself
Down from the temple! It is written, too,
That God shall give His angels charge of Thee,
Lest Thou should dash Thy foot against a stone."
In patience and in meekness, yet in words
Of grave rebuke, replied the holy Lamb,
"'Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God,' His Word
Declares it." Then the angry, worsted fiend
Made yet a bolder blasphemous attempt.
He took Him to a mountain, where Christ saw
The kingdoms of the world; and thus he spoke:
"If Thou fall down and worship me, to Thee
The worlds shall all be given." But then
The Saviour rose in majesty, and smiled
Upon the dark-faced tempter of our race,
And sent him from His presence rapidly.
"Get thee behind Me, Satan, for God's Word
Has said, 'Thou shalt but worship God the Lord,
Him only shalt thou serve.'"

And in that hour
The victory was won. The vanquished foe
Stole from His presence, and the angels came
And ministered unto Him.

Do you know,
Ye who are tempted in life's wilderness,

That 'twas for you Christ suffered ? Do not fear
 The tempter's power, for Christ is standing by,
 With loving hands to bless and comfort you,
 And grave, stern glance, to send the foe away.
 Oh, do not feel forsaken : trust in Him,
 And ever, for His sake who died for you,
 Go boldly forward. You shall victors be,
 And need not hang your heads, and need not fast,
 For He has won for you the feast of joy.

MANY HAPPY RETURNS.

" Her Majesty's birthday was loyally celebrated throughout the kingdom."—
 DAILY PAPERS.

THE bells rang out through the merry day,
 And men at work in the morning sheen,
 Busy with boats in the little bay,
 Or out in the fields where the crops are green,
 Said, " God bless the Queen ! "

The children hurrying off to school,
 Among sheaves of knowledge the ears to glean,
 Cried merrily, " She is the one to rule ! "
 And they tossed their caps with a pleasure keen :
 " God save the Queen ! "

The women at work in the cottage homes
 Sang the babes to sleep with this song that day,
 " God bless the Queen ; and whatever comes,
 Let her long in the land that loves her stay,
 As her people pray."

The merchant busy at desk or bank,
Hearing the bells his thoughts between,
Rested a moment her reign to thank,
For peace and plenty that long have been.
God bless the Queen !

Grey heads were lifted. "There ne'er will be,"
Said many men whom the years make wise,
"A monarch gentle and good as she !
God shower His gifts from the bounteous skies
On the country's Prize !"

So the loyal hearts that are filled with love,
As the day passed gladly everywhere,
Sent to the Father-King above
The whispered sound of an earnest prayer,
On the summer air.

For we know our Queen ! She is wise and good,
With a mother's heart and a widow's face ;
She does kind deeds that are understood,
She comes to many a darkened place,
With her gentle grace.

No added title can make her great,
She is great already ; and none can say
How utterly mournful and desolate
Will the nation be, when her genial sway
Shall have passed away.

Does she long sometimes for the hour of rest,
And him who waits on the other shore,
Crowned and happy, serene and blest,
And wish that her reign with its toil were o'er?
But we need her more,—

And with all our hearts do we sing and pray,
God save Her Majesty, bless the Queen,
And give her many a glad birthday,
And be the Helper He aye has been,
To our noble Queen.

MARCH IN FAIRLIGHT GLEN.

THE lion is asleep to-day,
And like a lamb for gentleness,
Or like an angel glad to bless,
March spends its strength in pleasant play.

The ever-changing, restless sea,
Is glad her colours to display,
Of blue and green, and silver grey,
The while the ships sail placidly.

The sun shines down with loving smile,
And fleecy clouds float to and fro
Above the glen where violets grow,
And the breeze-songs the hours beguile.

Where last year's nuts and acorns lie,
And ivy creeps, and ferns are green,
Whole books of promises are seen
Spread out before the approving sky.

And round about the "dripping well,"
Whose gurgling music fills the vale,
The celandine and primrose pale
Have an entrancing tale to tell—

That joyous spring is drawing near,
Borne onward by strong winds and showers,
And waited for by budding flowers
And weary hearts that hold her dear.

And sea, and sky, and greening glen,
With one accord their welcome sing,
And greet the coming of the spring
With blessings for the sons of men.

And we glad-hearted swell the strain ;
God sends His gifts to those who wait,
And He will give, ere it be late,
To you and me His spring again !

IN SHANK'LIN CHINE.

Is there a world of pomp and noise ?
I am so far from every sound,
But water trickling from the ground,
And blithe birds singing of their joys,
That now and then it seems to me
There is no world where people be.

Where has the world a fairer spot ?
And where is found so deep repose
As here, where branches meet and close
Above my head, and where is not
A single sign of sin or pain
To bring the heart-ache back again ?

Alone and glad my way I take
Through winding paths of sun and shade,
By hidden nests which birds have made,
And mossy homes of fern and brake ;
And every step upon the sod
Speaks to me of the love of God.

Through the leaf-lattice on the height
I look down on the smiling sea,
Where waves are dancing merrily,
Bedecked with diamond drops of light,
And feel how fair in shine or shade,
Is this glad world which God has made.

Yet there's a world of work and noise !
I scarce can shut it from this China !
It holds the friends who round me twine,
And even here they make my joys,
And gently woo me back again
To graver scenes of toil and pain.

And I would rather dwell with them
In the full life of human love,
Than stay all earthly care above,
And be content with leaf and gem ;
For there are better things for me,
Than idle days beside the sea.

I thank my God for beauteous sights,
For glens and valleys, leaves and flowers,
For ocean music, and still hours,
For peaceful days and restful nights,
And old tasks waiting as before
For me, when holidays are o'er.

SABBATH IN DARENTH VALE

THERE is joyous life in the laughing valleys,
And light is flashing along the slopes,
And stealing in through the woodland alleys
Like sweet surprises of dawning hopes.

The daisies gaze from the grass-green meadows
Up to the heights of the tranquil blue,
As if they would rise from the world of shadows
To the Father-eyes that are looking through.

The cowslips bow to the soft winds' breathing,
The violet purples the moss-green shade,
The faithful ivy is fondly wreathing
Its arms where always its trust was stayed.

And everywhere there are bright things growing,
Painting with beauty the verdant sod,
As if they were hopeful and happy, knowing
They also share in the love of God.

The birds sing out in a joyous chorus :
Cuckoo, nightingale, lark, and thrush,
Raise their anthems in sweetness o'er us ;
Then let them die to a thankful hush.

There is no sign of a robe of sadness,
The eyes of Nature are no more dim ;
Her heart is full of a grateful gladness,
And all things join in her Sabbath hymn.

And we will sing of the Hand that ever
Through pleasant places our feet have led ;
God has forsaken His children never,
But guided, sheltered, and saved instead.

For to-day we think of the Father's blessing
Poured on us duly through all life's ways,
Since we played in our childhood, little guessing
What joys He would give us in after Mays.

So, resting here in the bright spring weather,
What can we do, but, with friends above
And happy companions, sing together,
"God is our Father, and God is Love" ?

WESTON WOODS.

WE can see the footsteps
Of the early spring :
And the woods are vocal
While the joy birds sing ;
Primroses and violets
Scent the bracing air,
And leaves say in whispers,
"God is everywhere."

Listen to the robins,
Ballads sweet sing they,
Telling how the Father
Feeds them every day :

SONGS OF SUNSHINE.

Snow has never hurt them,
Nor the boisterous wind,
And they say in chorus,
"God is always kind."

Peer from out the branches
Downward to the sea ;
Hear the hollow music
Where the dark waves be ;
They are like bass voices
Joining in the song,
And they roll the answer,
"God, the Lord, is strong."

There are other echoes,
From the town they rise ;
Hearts are there all happy,
Spirits that are wise,
Faces worn with sorrow,
Yet, hopes fixed above,
Say they all with reverence,
"God, indeed, is love."

Let us join the chorus,
We have much to tell ;
For the great good Father
Doeth all things well.
From the woodland pathways,
From moss-covered sod—
Yea, from all creation,
Praises be to God.

THE STRANGERS' GROUND.

"John Keats died in Rome, and was buried in the strangers' ground."—CARPENTER.

OH, little did it matter where the blithe young poet slept !
He had had his twenty summers ; he had sung and he had wept ;
He had dreamed of the fair city, and he sought it now to die,
While his dreams of fame and honour mocked his hopes and
 passed him by ;
Far away from home and country was his rest-place early found,
And it does not wound his spirit that he sleeps in strangers' ground.

'Tis an oft-repeated story. Every day of every year,
When the cold death-angel threatens, timid hearts, in hope or fear,
To evade his rigorous summons, pass to other lands away—
(All too soon *that* evening cometh to the longest, fairest day !)
But no miracle of healing to their saddest prayer is found,
And they have to join the sleepers who are in the strangers' ground.

But the tale is full of pathos. It were hard to pass away,
With strange lights about us shining at the closing of the day,
With the unfamiliar faces looking calmly into ours,
And the dread of what may follow at the failing of our powers,
With the hunger and the longing but to hear old voices sound,
And perhaps the unwept burial in the foreign strangers' ground !

But a brighter vision follows. It is possible to die
In an unacquainted household with no comrade standing by,
But with one Face so revealed, and the shining home so near,
That the spirit takes departure without one regret or fear.
Does it matter where the entrance to our city may be found ?
The tired body sleeps full sweetly in the strangers' burial ground.

So we need not fear to journey. Every land, where'er it be,
Has some hill from which ascending our glad eyes can heaven see;
And, since angels shall be with us, and the friends we love shall wait
With their words of joyous welcome round about the open gate,
And since over every country Christ's awakening voice shall sound,
Does it matter who lies waiting in the strangers' sleeping ground?

DOVE NEST.

Mrs. Hemans, who spent a summer at Dove Nest, said in a letter, "I am so delighted with the spot, that I scarcely know how I shall leave it."

HIDDEN away among sheltering trees,
Where her face was fanned by the mountain breeze,
Where her heart was moved by the gentle stir,
And the leaves had voices that spoke to her,
The singer found in this quiet nest
A blessed haven of peaceful rest.

With misty eyes she would often see
How strangely bright can the earth-home be ;
For though she sang of "the better land,
Where the pearls gleam forth on the golden strand,"
She loved this beautiful world of ours,
With its grand, green hills, and its fair, sweet flowers.

She walked at morn through the forest ways,
Among old brown trunks, where the squirrel plays ;
And the birds came round in a happy throng,
And ravished the singer's heart with song,
And they told her secrets about themselves,
And what they thought of the fays and elves.

At noon she looked upon Windermere,
With its silver waters bright and clear ;
And the glancing sails on the tiny wave
Would render the poet-woman grave,
For she saw that the shadow of grief and care
Darkened even the faces there.

And at eventide, when the sunset-glow
Lovingly stole to the vale below,
And the purple mists on the mountain-heads
Wrapped them away in their shadow-beds,
Her heart would listen, her eyes would see,
If deeper lessons with night should be.

So she gathered the treasures of wood and stream,
Of rocky pastures and sparkling beam,
Into her heart ; then she wove them well
Into wreaths of song, with her magic spell,
And scattered them over this world of pain,
Until saddened faces grew bright again.

Toilers at work by the dusty street,
Weary with sorrow and faint with heat,
Had visions fair of the lake and skies,
Which were seen for them by the poet's eyes,
And wandered in fancy by wood and stream,
Led by her song through the pleasant dream.

* * * * *

We bless our singer. We love her still,
Though her voice is silent by lake and hill,
But is she not living, in brightness clad,
With the happy-hearted, the ever-glad ?
Then perchance when we meet with the dear home-band,
We shall hear her sing in the better land.

SIR WALTER SCOTT AT KENILWORTH.

A GREAT mysterious mass of walls, whose story few might know,
And lofty towers that silently told of the long ago,
Stood in the midst of sunny slopes, where the oaks and hawthorns
grow.

The stones were taken from the wall that reared its lofty head,
And they built the lowly cottage-rooms and the humble useful
shed ;
They which had made the castle strong, strengthened the hut
instead.

But a man came from his northern home and visited the scene ;
He looked on Leicester's tower, with far-seeing eyes and keen,
And he saw the splendid pageantry and show which once had
been.

He saw the floor, where floor was none, thronged by the rich and
great,
The haughty queen in gorgeous robes, with wondrous pomp and
state ;
And a prison in the midst of all, and a young heart desolate.

He saw fierce faces white with rage, and he looked in cruel eyes ;
He heard indignant, honest words, and the fawning, false replies ;
And the prayers which from the pleasance rose in passion to the
skies.

The stones told secrets unto him, leaves chattered on the trees ;
He heard strange sighs in gloomy vaults, and laughter in the
breeze—
And with his wonder-working pen put life into all these.

Did he think of Kenilworth at last when he spoke in earnest
mood
His dying words, " Be virtuous, religious ; dear, *be good* " ?
Such lessons do the ruins teach, if they are but understood !

BY CHARLOTTE BRONTË'S GRAVE,

IN HAWORTH CHURCH.

WE climbed the hills in the gloaming time,
When the winds were ringing a mournful chime ;
We walked o'er wastes of the heather dead,
And saw the shadows o'er moorland spread,
As the short, but sunny, October day
Passed into twilight, and died away.

And then, through the mists on the hills and dells,
There rang the sounds of the evening bells,
And a message came in the stirring air
Bidding us forth to the house of prayer ;—
But how could we walk through the steep, stoned street,
Without thinking of other, departed feet.

We could almost picture the slim, swift form,
Hurrying fast through the gathering storm :
And the lighted windows so near the fane
Pelted oft by the wind and rain,
Seemed to show to our eager and hungry eyes
The face of the writer so strangely wise.

We knew she had passed through the opening door,
Had trodden the turf on the gloomy moor,

Had come from out of the stormy night
Into the church with its soft, warm light,
While the winds that lingered on shadowy wings
Whispered many mysterious things.

It seemed that her presence was in the air
While we joined in the words of the Evening Prayer
We knew that we knelt by the silent grave
Of a faithful woman whose heart was brave,
And the might of whose vigorous, burning thought,
With many a vision of joy was fraught.

But the preacher spoke—'twas All-hallow e'en—
And he drew us away from what had been,
From the heart that had suffered for very love,
To the ransomed spirit at rest above,
To the beautiful land where the summers last
And only the sin and the grief are past.

He spoke of the multitudes gathered there
Where no sighs of sorrow can rend the air,
With the pain all over, the work well done,
And the crown of the "more than conqueror" won,
The tears all dried, the mistakes forgiven,
And the rest for all who have nobly striven.

So we blessed our God for His heaven above,
And the happy spirits that dwell in love ;
We know that our writer can understand
The things that were dim in this darker land,
And now that the mists have passed away,
She lives and works in the brighter day.

*MONTGOMERY'S TOMB.**

A POET lived where the crowd was great,
And the workers' feet passed early and late ;
His heart had quiet, and sang its song
Where the sounds of hammers were loud and long.

He loved the places of work and noise,
For he shared the depths of the people's joys ;
He knew their sorrows, they made him sad,
And in their pleasures his heart was glad.

He found good friends among God's bright flowers,
And green fields wooed him through sunny hours ;
But with glad content he turned again
To read God's love in his fellow-men.

The children knew him and sought the face
That age robbed not of its kindly grace ;
And the hearts of many distressed and poor,
Grew light and glad as they passed his door.

It thrilled his soul when his hymns were sung
By many thousands of old and young ;
And each new year, for the children's part,
He drew some song from his loving heart.

" I have little wealth ; I will give a hymn,"
He oft would say. And our eyes grew dim
With regretful tears on that mournful day,
When the angels called him from earth away.

* Montgomery's Tomb, at Sheffield, was erected by the teachers and scholars of the Sunday-schools.

But the busy town where he loved to be,
And the schools that had known his sympathy,
The friends he had cheered with his kindly speech,
And the little ones whom he used to teach,—

Will keep him still in their hearts of love,
And will meet him soon in the land above;
For they know that the poet passed away,
To live in the home of eternal day.

And there in the presence of Christ the King,
It needs that Montgomery still must sing;
For if songs can rise through the thick earth-air,
They are sweeter by far which are rising there.

NOTTINGHAM CEMETERY.

HERE is a place that is rich in tradition,
A place of mysterious, wonderful caves;
Here there are sleepers of rank and condition
Reposing in peace, 'neath the marble-crowned graves.

Could the clods speak, what a wonderful story
Would they have to tell of the far-away times,
When the people were wild, and had strange thoughts of glory,
And ne'er heard the music of sweet Sabbath chimes!

These dark "Druids' caves" keep their secrets of sadness,
And tell not the scenes they might blush to reveal;
So we only can guess all the horror and madness,
Which these dim recesses were used to conceal.

But we think how the forest was vocal with singing,
And how there were laughter and cheer in the glen,
When the hills, and the dales, and the meadows were ringing
With bold Robin Hood and his gay merry men.

We think, too, how Byron had dreams of wild beauty
As he rested awhile in this calm, pleasant shade,
And gentle Kirke White wrote of sweetness and duty,
While mournfully musing within the cool glade.

And then we look out where the people are sleeping,
All safely and silently here in the graves,
Having finished all labour and sorrow and weeping,
And say, "It is good they should rest in these caves."

For, should not "God's acre" with beauty be brightened?
And should not His children, now hushed into rest,
Of pain freed for ever, of all burdens lightened,
Lie down in the places most lovely and best?

And, oh! what a sight will this old place discover,
And, oh! what a wonderful crowd there will be,
When the Great Day has come and the sleeping is over,
And all the Lord's hosts shall be happy and free.

God grant that these sleepers, and all who shall follow,
Made glad when this life and its troubles shall cease,
May rise to a bright and unending to-morrow,
In the Home of the happy, the Land of release!

AT THE LAND'S END.

OH ! booming, thunderous waters,
Ye are all mirth to-day !
And ye toss about the giant rocks
Your fountains of white spray,
Till down the darkening crevices
The water runs in streams,
While the western path across the waves
Like molten silver gleams !

Was ever foam so snowy ?
Was ever sea so green ?
Did ever waves go sounding
The hollow caves between,
As where the great Atlantic
Goes sweeping out of sight,
Or laves the " Irish Lady,"
And the feet of the " Armed Knight " ?

The stately " Longships " lighthouse
Lifts its friendly head on high ;
To-night its star, clear-shining,
As the lonely ships go by,
Will cheer the sailors, sighing
At the thought of wife and friend,
And light home-pictures for them
As they pass the rough Land's End.

The cormorants and the sea-gulls
Join their pathetic cries
With the thunders of the ocean
And the wild wind's passion-sighs,

And we think of the poet-preacher *
On "the narrow neck of land,"
As betwixt the seas unbounded
In the calm March sun we stand.

Our hearts are filled with wonder
At the might and power of Him
Whose voice controls the waters
In the day and midnight dim.
And we sing our songs of rapture,
With solemn voice and low,
For He comforts us by saying,
He goes where'er we go.}

What shall we do but trust Him
In the storm and in the calm?
The birds and winds and waters
Are joining in our psalm;
And we know that He, Almighty,
The Wonderful, the Great,
Will love us; and His children
Shall ne'er be desolate.

So our hearts are calm and happy,
As we look upon the sea,
For we know the Father's mercy
Is where'er His children be;
And we set our faces inland
With a hopeful smile again—
Oh! life has many changes,
But God will aye remain.

* J. Wesley.

THE CHURCH IN THE WOOD.

(HOLLINGTON.)

IN the brown but budding woodlands
Through the week the children play ;
Then across the grass-green meadows
Come the worshippers to pray.
Brighter grow the people's faces
Turning from the busy week,
As through primrose-paths they wander
God within His courts to seek.

But, though on the Sabbath only
Human voices sing to God,
These sweet woods are never silent,—
Every flower that decks the sod,
And each twig that pointing upward
Whispers through the greening ways,
Swells and lengthens the joy-chorus
To the loving Father's praise.

All the week the sparrows twitter,
Every day the robin sings,
Soon will come the merry cuckoo
To the church where ivy clings :
And ere long, through darkling even
And the solemn hours of night,
Nightingales will grow pathetic
While they sing of love's delight.

So the flowers among the brushwood
And the bird above its nest,
And the breezes in the tree-tops,
And the roots by moss caressed,

And the leaves that kiss together,
And all things both bright and dim
Know the love of the great Father,
And are singing praise to Him.

And, away from towns and cities,
This old church within the wood,
Teaches ever to the strangers
Lessons of the meek and good ;
Preaches sermons to the people,
That to love and do the right,
Is to learn the happy secret
Of a life of calm delight.

Very quiet are the sleepers
In God's Acre round about,
And good words of chastened sorrow
Heal the mourner's fear and doubt :
" All life's aching pain of patience,
All its tears for ever past,
All its yearnings, and its strivings,
Stilled to endless peace at last."

So the woods, and church, and grave-stones,
And the flowers that meekly smile,
Say, " Take comfort, musing stranger,
Sorrow lasts but for awhile ;
Everywhere arise God's temples,
Do not fear His way to take,
Work in hope, then sleep in silence
Till the eternal day shall break."

IN GRASMERE CHURCHYARD

WHERE the "gushing Rothay" flows,
And the yew its shadow throws,
 There's a humble grave,
Where no costly marble stone
Makes the silent sleeper known,
 But green branches wave.

Round about the glad birds sing,
Where the woods cool shadows fling,
 And the land is fair ;
For the murmurous music thrills
Through the lanes and up the hills
 On the summer air.

Here the strangers from afar,
Thronging where the beauties are,
 Stand with pensive smile,
Thinking of a friend who lies
With hands folded and closed eyes
 For a little while.

Yet no martial banners stir
O'er this lowly sepulchre
 Where the daisies grow ;
Only loving hearts whose pain
Has been soothed by the sweet strain
 Of the man below,—

Come with thoughts of thankfulness
For the power to teach and bless
 Given by God to him ;
And sometimes his friends who pass
Through the pleasant verdant grass
 Look with eyes made dim,

To the everlasting hills,
Sunny lakes, and rushing rills,
 With discerning eyes,
And while resting in fair ways
Send a tribute of heart-praise
 Upward to the skies.

So the "poet of the lakes,"
Sleeping till in heaven he wakes
 Better songs to sing,
Even now, though silently
Speaking to the passers by,
 Serveth the great King.

FURNESS ABBEY.

HAD but the ruins voices, wondrous tales
These stones would tell, of the old long ago,
When the sun shone through richly-coloured glass
And 'neath the arches priests processioning,
Passed to the music of the matin hymn,
Or solemn vesper chants. They would declare
The hidden secrets of the ancient years,
And draw most graphic pictures of the past
For tourists' wondering eyes. Even now the walls,
Stately and ivy-crowned, the arches grand,
The cloisters and the aisles, and the carved seats
Where the high altar stood, seem to the mind
Of the awed dreamer to be filled with forms
Busy with life.

Seven hundred years ago
The Norman monks looked for a pleasant place

Where they might dwell ; and their sagacious head,
Evanus, found a deep, secluded dell,
Through which the silver river singing ran,
Where grass was green, and woods were plentiful,
And the strong hills were like God's sentinels
To guard from harm ; and there within the " Vale
Of Nightshade " found the monks a home.

A prince,
Pious and loyal, in the name of God,
And " for the safety of Matilda's soul
And his," declared that he would gladly give
(Knowing that flowers must fade, and princes die)
Furness and Walney, Dalton, Ulverston,
With fisheries and lands, with " sac " and " soc,"
And everything belonging, to the monks,
And so to God.

The lakes were filled with fish,
The corn waved on the hills, and in the vales
The cattle grazed, and the flocks grew and spread ;
And as the riches were increased, with joy
They raised the stately abbey, till it stood
In solemn grandeur, mighty and complete ;
And here the choral hymn was sweetly sung,
And white-robed monks passed chanting many prayers,
And skilful hands wrote manuscripts to live.
Here strangers came, and here the sick were nursed,
And solemn pomp of gorgeous funeral
Subdued the people. Here the abbots ruled
And died ; and here the little children came
In happy crowds.

The scene was greatly changed,
When the eighth Henry, needing gold and lands,
And choosing to reform the ills he guessed,
Dissolved the monasteries.

One day in spring,
When April sunlight lay upon the earth,
And fair Furness was dressed in robes of flowers,
The Abbey gates received their enemies,
And courteous monks, with faces sad and dark,
Submitted to the inevitable grief and loss,
And signed away their precious heritage.

And so to-day there are no worshippers,
But only pleasure-seekers and light crowds
Within the walls. The beauty of the past
Still lingers in the ruins, but decay
Has made the walls to totter and to break,
And all the monks have passed away to dust.
But God is worshipped yet ! In lowlier shrines
The people gather, but they bring to Him
True service still, and though the abbeys fall,
The temple of the Lord, not made with hands,
Is yet upreared, and it shall aye remain.

THE ROBINS IN DUDLEY CASTLE.

MERRILY hopping from tree to tree,
The birds are as happy as birds can be ;
Their red breasts flash on the mouldering walls,
As they stop to answer each other's calls.
And the browning branches are gay with song,
For the robins cannot be silent long.

Does it matter to them that they sing to-day
Where earthly glory has found decay ?

Nay ; they are as blithe on the "warder's tower,"
As the robins that sang there at any hour ;
And they sweetly warble about the "keep,"
Though no fair ladies are there to weep.

There were robins, doubtless, to spend their breath
In song for the ears of Elizabeth ;
Their soothing message would fill the air,
That stole to Mary imprisoned there ;
And quite as sweetly they sing to me—
The friendly robins, whose songs are free.

Little they care for the pageants proud,
Or the blasts of the trumpets fierce and loud ;
But they love the quiet of hill and glen,
And the cheery voices of peaceful men ;
And summer and winter the robins sing,
In faithful love to the Maker-King.

And so, whatever shall pass away,
There are some delights that will always stay ;
The towers may totter, the strong walls break,
And kings and nobles the earth forsake ;
But God is praised by the passing breeze,
And robins sing in the autumn trees.

And we who linger, where, long ago,
Proud hearts were joyous, or filled with woe,
Give thanks to Him that not even yet
Does He the needy earth forget ;
For His hands of mercy still blessings bring,
And we and the robins have cause to sing.

LIVINGSTONE.

A CONQUEROR comes home ! Shall glad bells ring
And eager crowds throng in the flower-strewn street ?
Shall merry maidens join his praise to sing ?
And smiling men go forth the brave to meet ?

Nay ; muffled peals that tell a nation's grief,
And tear-dimmed eyes, and sorrow-softened tone,
And hands that press each other for relief,
Have met to welcome back our Livingstone.

We hoped he would not die, but he is dead !
The clear, brave eyes that looked in danger's face,
The stalwart form, the thoughtful, time-tinged head,
Are home at last—to claim a sleeping-place.

And he shall have the best. He finds a grave
Where kings and princes, and our greatest sleep.
The good old man, so faithful and so brave,
Shall lie within the Abbey ; and we weep,

Because his eyes are closed and cannot see,
He cannot hear the plaudits of his friends,
Nor dream about the heart-felt sympathy
And love which for all loss would make amends.

We have our other heroes whom we crown—
They gained our victories by fire and sword ;
We give them praiseful honours and renown,—
But this last hero served the peaceful Lord.

He made our dear old England loved, not feared ;
He healed, he did not slay, the savage men ;
He made the Saviour's name to be revered,
And taught the dying how to live again.

He called all men his brothers, and the crowd
That other men despised he loved and blessed ;
He prayed for all ; he knew the dusky-browed
Had need of Christ, that they might find His rest.

He longed, and strove, and wrought, that He might see
His Master worshipped, and the simple taught,
And all the tribes of Africa set free,
Nor human forms again be sold and bought.

He pushed his way among the stranger-host,
To give us knowledge and to make us wise ;
He pined for friends, and felt alone and lost,
That we might profit by his enterprise.

And now at last he rests ! He sees the face
Of Him whom he has loved, the Father's Son ;
He has been welcomed to the highest place,
And heard the Master say to him, " Well done."

He is not now uncrowned—he lives in light ;
He is not now alone, but with the great ;
He has forgotten all the dreary night,
And how he mourned when he was desolate.

And we will tell our children of his grave,
And teach them how the great man understood,
That to be true and mighty, strong and brave,
It needs, that we be humble, pure, and good.

And when our hearts are sad that we no more
Shall clasp his hand, and hear his cheery tone,
We yet may pray that on the heavenly shore
We all may meet again our Livingstone.

SHAKESPEARE'S HOUSE AT STRATFORD.

MEN's hearts beat fast and their eyes are dim
As they stand in the lights and glooms
Which memory makes in its thoughts of him
Who played in the little rooms ;
For the picture comes of a bright-eyed boy,
Merry, and brave, and glad,
Who knew not yet of the wondrous earth,
Nor the mighty power he had.

Did his mother see, with her wistful eyes,
How the light of genius shone
In the face that bent o'er the painted flower
And saw beauty in a stone ?
Did she dream, in the chimney-corner there,
That ever a day would break
When the stranger's feet should tread the floor
In reverence for his sake ?

But he ? God gave to him eyes to see,
And a mind to plan and dream ;
His heart was sad for the woe around,
And glad in the sunny beam.
Trees whispered secrets for him to hear,
And the meadows and the brooks
Became to him in his boyhood's days
His teachers and his books.

The wayside hedge was a school to him,
And the birds and bees in throngs
Brought him their messages evermore,
And comforted him with songs.
And he looked in the face of a man, and read
Till his heart was an open page.
So the youth learnt lessons from earth and skies,
From childhood and hoary age.

The years rolled by, and God gave to him
A marvellous power of thought,
And words of beauty and strength to live,
With might and with sweetness fraught.
And he passed from earth, but his works remain
As our household words to-day,
For where mind is eager and reason keen,
Our Shakespeare's name has sway.

So the crowds that come to the little house
In the vale where the Avon flows,
Are bound together by love of him
Whose genius the whole world knows.
And thoughtful strangers give thanks to God
For the good deeds men have wrought,
For the burning words which they spoke and wrote,
And our heritage of thought.

IN BLACK GANG CHINE.

THE sea is flashing its silver light,
And fiercely its surface gleams ;
There is not a cloud in the wide blue sky
To temper its burning beams.

But cool in the shadow the great rock throws,
I sit through the scorching day,
While the white rocks glitter, and ships go by,
And the glad waves tireless play.

And I think of One who has thrown for me,
In the midst of a weary land,
A great Rock's shadow where I might rest,
Though the sun was on every hand ;
Where life's hot fever could touch me not,
But happy, and safe, and calm,
Through the smiting heat I could sit and sing
The words of a thankful psalm.

The sea was angry and rough one day,
And its waves like mountains rose ;
And the restless waters heaved and rushed,
Nor an instant had repose.
I saw the wreck of a ship that sank,
Beaten in stormy strife ;
But I was safe on the mighty rock,
Living a tranquil life.

So the Rock of Ages has been to me
A refuge and safe retreat,
A hiding-place from the storms of life,
As well as from life's fierce heat ;
Waves have beaten and tempests howled,
But happy and safe are they
Who are hidden away in the great Rock's cleft
In the dangerous, stormy day.

The winds were armies of conquering foes
Smiting the trembling trees,
And over the hills in their might they came,
Lashing the foaming seas.

But I clung to the rock till the wild hour passed,
For nothing could harm me there ;
The rocks are firm in the tempest times,
As well as in balmy air.

And I said, I will cling to my Rock of strength,
Whatever the day may be,
I am safe, and happy, and calm, and free,
For no danger can reach to me.
And oh, that the joy may be mine one day,
From the might of the creeping waves,
To lift some helpless and drowning ones
To the height of the Rock that saves

IN LANCASTER CASTLE.

[The Castle has long been used as a prison.]

THE merry sun shines on the hills,
And calls the flowers to sweetest life,
And silvers o'er the singing rills,
And blesses men amid the strife
Of labour in the streets below,
And lightens many a heart of woe.

But in the Castle men are sad,
And women see the sun and sigh ;
To them the summer is not glad,
For the hot hours pass drearily
In bitter thoughts, and mocking dreams
Of forests where the sunlight gleams,—

Of broad, green slopes where shadows creep,
And where the Lune winds on its way ;
And if they sometimes turn and weep,
Or lift sad eyes to God and pray,
What wonder, since the land is fair,
And naught of beauty reaches there ?

For round about the Castle tower
No ladies glide with stately mien,
Nor lords of princely might and dower,
As in the days that once have been ;
But the wrong-doers mourn their wrong,
Or would forget their care in song.

The birds come near and sing to them,
But scarce their madrigals are heard ;
The raindrop sparkles like a gem,
But brings to them nor sign nor word ;
For to caged eyes the very sun
Is darkened by the ill-deeds done.

And yet a message of great peace
Is borne within the dungeon walls ;
There is a love that does not cease,
Though sin the hardened heart enthrals ;
There is a Voice, where'er men be,
That gently says, "Come unto Me."

Oh, might the prisoners' hearts relent,
And turn to Him whate'er their crime,
With those sad hours there would be blent
The brightness of the summer-time ;
For when God gives His pardon-kiss,
He fills the empty heart with bliss.

A SCENE IN LANCASHIRE.

'Twas the time of "losing." The morning tasks
Were done, and the looms were still.
The doors were opened, the women passed
In flocks from the crowded mill ;
And the clattering sound of the wooden clogs
Rang out in the autumn air,
As they came, the young and the very old,
The plain and the strangely fair.

A man was looking with watchful eyes
At the mixed, pathetic sight
Of the motley crowd of shawl-clad heads,
And the faces worn and white.
He knew their toil and their weariness,
And the homes where poor folks dwell,
Their patient hoping and cheerfulness,
And he felt his heart to swell.

But a thought of joy came to him soon,
And he sang it gladly out,
As one whose hope was strong and true,
Nor tried by fear or doubt,
"There is a better world they say,
Unshadowed by the night,
Where sin and woe have passed away,
A country, oh, so bright."

Two girls in passing heard the words,
And they caught the glad refrain,
"There is a better world, they say,"
And they sang it not in vain,

For the next, and next began to sing,
Till a thousand voices sweet
Upraised the song of the better world
And its music filled the street.

So they went away to their lonely homes,
And the hurried mid-day meal,
With happy thoughts of the Father's house
And the perfect joy they feel
Who have gained its light. And they blessed their God
For the Sunday-school and song,
And because they knew that if toil be great,
The rest shall come ere long.

CHURCH RUINS.

HALF hidden by the friendly trees,
And kissed by zephyrs from the seas,
These walls are thronged with memories.

They stand forth in the summer air,
And are not desolate and bare.
Because the ivy clingeth there.

Only the winds disturb the calm,
Only the birds sing out the psalm
From stately oak or waving palm.

There is no face with tender smile
To light the silent, sombre aisle,
Then bow in sacred prayer awhile.

There are no children's rapid feet
To come in from the scorching street,
The King with holy song to greet.

There are no men with snowy hair,
To cast the burden of their care
At Jesus' feet in trustful prayer.

There is no sound, but whispered things,
That tell of earth's evanishings,
And the decay that slow age brings.

Yet who can tell what joy or woe
The church in ruins used to know,
In the dim days of long ago ?

What throngs came through the open door,
And paced across the hallowed floor,
And knelt, the Father to adore ;

What glad thanksgiving songs arose
For triumph over humbled foes,
And free deliverance from woes ;

What vows were on the altar laid,
What meek confessions softly made,
What peace was given to hearts afraid.

And now but four old walls remain
To darkly hint of joy and pain,
And glory that comes not again !

But who needs mourn with vain regret ?
The walls may die, the Church lives yet,
And men shall ne'er God's truth forget.

Our father passed to other lands—
But still on high *His* temple stands,
The house of God not made with hands !

A MODERN HERO.

HIS hands were hard, and his face was brown,
But he won the right to a hero's crown ;
He did his duty, nor thought of shame
Shall ever tarnish brave Humphrey's name,
For the man is known by a valiant deed
That shall stir all hearts as the tale they read.

" You must take my wife in the Customs' boat,"
The officer said. It was soon afloat.
The man and his comrade knew the sea,
But they did not think of the storm to be,
And they cared for the lady till on the shore,
They found one half of their duty o'er.

When the boat returned at the close of day,
The wind was rough in Carmarthen Bay ;
But the men pulled willingly each his oar,
As he thought of the light through his own home door
And knew how comfort and love are won
By him who works till the set of sun.

But at Warley the boat was suddenly caught
By a gust of wind, and before they thought
How to make ready, the startled three
Were o'erturned in the midst of the angry sea ;
Beaten and battered by violent waves,
What hope could they have but of ocean graves?

Only Humphrey had learned to swim ;
And he felt that the others must look to him

For help and succour. No time he lost,
But gave to his mate on the rough wave tost
An oar to save him. Alas ! the tide
Was for him too mighty—he sank and died.

Then Humphrey swam to the lady's aid,
And bade her take courage, nor be afraid ;
With care he righted the little boat,
But the water was in it, it could but float,
And then across it he placed the mast,
That the woman's arms might hold it fast.

Awhile he clung to the other side,
But all seemed hopeless. The lady cried,
“ Each for himself, and you can swim ;
Oh, leave me now.” Then his eyes grew dim,
For he thought of the light in his cottage door,
And he knew he was able to swim ashore !

But, forsake a woman ? Not so, not he ;
Could he leave her a prey to the raging sea ?
He knew if he did she must needs despair,
So he steadied himself with a short, swift prayer,
Then screamed and shouted that help might come,
Till the waves in their greediness made him dumb.

And help arrived ; but alas ! too late
For the noble man who had met his fate ;
The lady was rescued, but he ?—One more
Has reached, through water, the heavenly shore,
And knows in the country of “ no more sea,”
How happy the children of God can be.

But oh ! for the wife and the children seven,
Who mourn for the father safe in heaven ;

And yet there are hearts that are full of love,
Who will think of the hero passed above,
And give of their plenty and pity take
On the fatherless ones for the father's sake.

ONE YEAR OLD.

NOBODY wanted you very much,
Baby, a year ago,
For you came when we suffered from sorrow's touch
And the graveyard was white with snow.
But as soon as we saw you, a warm love-spring,
From a source that we could not trace,
Came leaping upward a smile to bring
On your own and your nurse's face.

Have we really had you a whole long year,
O baby, with laughing eyes?
And what have you learned in your dwelling here?
Do you know that we think you wise?
For you stretch your arms to the friends you choose
With a gesture that none resist,
Till we pity our neighbours for what they lose,
With no baby that must be kissed.

A year is it, darling? We can but pray
While the light in your dear face burns,
God grant our baby of this same day
Many happy returns.
For we know that winter would come indeed
If our Marie were not as bright,
And did not e'en by her very need
Give to our hearts delight.

Of course you have many a birthday gift,
A rattle, a doll, and ball,
And something too heavy for you to lift,
And affection to crown them all.
You thank the givers, and smilingly,
With the only word you know ;
And they are paid as your look they see,
And list to the long-drawn " Oh ! "

We love you, baby, and yet we sigh
Sometimes as we think of you,
For we wonder what troubles and griefs may lie
In the paths you must wander through.
Oh, little feet that can scarcely stand,
What miles you will have to go !
Oh, dimpled, notable, clasping hand
How weary you have to grow !

It is sad that your eyes should be dimmed with tears
And your head should be hot with pain ;
But, baby, why should we cherish fears ?
God's goodness will aye remain.
So we leave you to Him. May He guide your feet
Through the long, untrodden way,
And bless you always, and keep you, Sweet,
As good as you are to-day.

"THE CROWNING SONG."

No hope ! We knew it but too well, and we saw our darling's face,
So sweet in all its innocence, so perfect in its grace,
Grow wild and white with fever-heat, then grey with shades of
death,
And our hearts were torn with agony as we watched the painful
breath.

No hope ! We scarcely dared to think of all the sad words meant—
Of the silence and the emptiness when the little life was spent ;
Of the weary years that we must wait ere we saw her face again,
And forgot the look that last it wore of wonder and of pain.

But she had hope, for the little one had heard of the Saviour-King,
And she loved in morning's freshest hours her songs of love to bring ;
And now when sickness stole her strength and her eyes with death
were dim,
Her thoughts were busy at His feet, and her heart arose to Him.

"Now let us sing the crowning song," looking around she said,
"And crown Him, crown Him Lord of all ;—let the crowns be on
His head."

Then she cried again for the good old hymn, till we faltered the
"All hail,"

And the tears were in our voices, as we saw her lips turn pale.

She sang with us for the last time, then the good words died away ;
One said, "She finishes the hymn in the bright land far away ;
For she is crowning Him who died with another glad child-song.
And we ? Ah ! let us wait awhile ; we shall sing it there ere long."

No hope? The hour was full of hope. We live in the silence now,
But we know that the Highest doeth well, and we humbly near
Him bow;
We will practise the hymn as best we may, till before His feet
we fall,
For we're nearer now than we used to be to the "Crown Him
Lord of all."

AN OLD LATCH.

"The history of a door-latch would be long."—EUGENIE DE GUERIN.

RUSTY and broken :—beyond a doubt
It is a thing that is quite worn out ;
And yet do I touch it tenderly,
For it tells a pathetic tale to me
Of eyes that have looked at it through the years
When bright with pleasure, or dim with tears,
Of hands that have lifted in days of yore
This strong old latch on the dwelling door.

It was raised one morn when the sun shone in,
And the world seemed emptied of grief and sin,
For the happy, loving, and sanguine pair
Who, passing into the sunny air,
Stood together 'neath God's blue sky,
And vowed to love until both should die.
Oh, fair indeed was the bride's sweet face
As she went through the door of the old home-place.

It was lifted once with a trembling hand
For the exit dour of a black-robed band ;
A coffin was carried, and solemn feet
Went to the place where the silent meet.

The mourners said, "He was true and brave,"
And their sad tears fell in the new-made grave ;
But the widow ne'er lifted the latch again
But her heart was rent by a thought of pain.

The colour flashed o'er a girl's fair cheek,
She was wilful, yet sought to be wise and meek.
But life was trying, and days were long,
And she found no space for her heart's free song—
Till she lifted the latch and passed away
From the narrow room to the sunny day
Among fields and flowers, where the cooling air
Swept from her forehead the marks of care.

So hands that were childish and hands grown old,
In the morning lights or the sunset's gold,
Through the summer's glory, or winter's snow,
From the heights of pleasure, or depths of woe,
Have lifted and dropped in the days of yore
This old iron-latch on the dwelling door,
And every heart that has beaten near,
Had it thought a moment, would hold it dear.

For the scenes it has looked on have had to tell
That the Father loveth His children well,
And that ever after a sorrow past
He maketh His sun to shine at last.
And so the old latch in its rusty days
Inspires my spirit to songs of praise ;
For life's commonest things may be made to prove
The patience and strength of His wondrous love.

TWO HOMES.

"These are they which came out of great tribulation."

HE used to live where narrow rooms
Closed round him all the day and night,
And taller houses stole the light,
And buried him in deeper glooms.

Where'er he turned there met his eyes
No beauteous forms to while the hours,
No hope-inspiring gems or flowers,
And scarce a patch of God's blue skies.

And outside, in the muddy street,
The squalid children cried or played,
And weary faces were displayed,
And all day there were sounds of feet,

That marched and ran, but did not rest,
And played a parody on life,
That with its eager zeal and strife
Goes on and on from east to west.

And near, the busy market-place
Threw out its clamour on the air,
And nearer still, a wild curse-prayer
Told its own tale of lack of grace.

And 'mid it all, the pain, the guile,
He wrought and toiled for daily bread,
And lifted up his fearless head,
And kept upon his face a smile.

He trusted in God's mighty love,
And rendered many a kindly deed
To children, and to men in need,
And waited for his rest above.

And when he longed for hills and streams,
And laughing flowers, and sunny seas,
And green leaves dancing in the breeze,
He only saw them in his dreams.

But one dark day there came to him
An angel with a veiled face,
Who led him to a larger place,
And into light no longer dim.

He passed the gates of pearl within,
And saw the city's jasper wall,
The clear bright gold that shone through all,
And crowns that victors died to win.

He listened to the songs they sing,
Whose tears are gone, whose robes are white,
And then he walked within the light,
And saw the face of Christ the King.

Now, could he speak to us who roam,
Would he not say, "Be patient still,
Though life be dark, yet wait God's will,
You soon will reach the other home"?

THE FIRST LOSS.


A MERRY, bright-eyed darling, with the summer in her eyes,
Was the first to leave her earthly home, and we stand in mute
surprise ;
There was not one who could be spared, and she the least of all—
But it ever is the best-beloved for whom the Lord doth call.

He knew with what child-ministries she won the deepest love,
And how her voice stole through the heart with its message from
above ;
He knew how closely tender hearts would fold her round about,
And hands grow strong with might of love to keep the reaper out ;—

And yet He sent His angel, Death, to cut the blossom down ;
He chose the fairest brow of all to wear the heavenly crown ;
And where the children are at play in the celestial street
They hear the sounds we weep to miss of the little eager feet.

What memories has she left behind ? Sad nights of deep distress,
When the pain that paled the darling's face hurt the watchers'
hearts no less ;
When weary hours dragged slowly by, and the morn brought no
relief,
And the evening shadows settled down on a home made dark by
grief.

Ah, yes ; but there are memories of a gladder kind than these—
Of the happy years that knew no pain, light as the summer breeze ;
Of the merry laugh that rang for joy in the homes of childish play,
And the grave eyes and beseeching hands when the children knelt
to pray.



'Tis good to muse on these instead of the last sad parting kiss,
And to know she leaves a pleasant home for a home of perfect
 bliss ;
And as we think of her to-day, the glad, the undefiled,
We thank the children's Saviour, it is well, well with the child.

A BLESSING FOR THE BOYS.

"The angel which redeemed me from all evil bless the lads,"—JACOB.

THE colours of the eventide were in the western skies,
And the darkness of the night of death was in the patriarch's
 eyes ;
The long day's work was finished now, and the gloaming hour was
 near,
And his spirit's eyes already saw the lights of heaven appear.

One last, long backward look he gave over departed years,
He must have seen some scenes of yore through mists of sorrow's
 tears ;
Some deeds were done for which, e'en now, he could have cried
 "Forgive,"
As he thought of stains upon the life God bade him purely live.

But God is full of mercy ; and though sin might make him sad,
The patriarch thought upon His love till his heart was greatly
 glad ;
The Lord had led him all the way, and given him joy for woe,
And bread and love in famine days, that he His power might
 know.

And then, the while he mused on this, friends came around the
bed,
And the old man heard his son's loved voice, and his soul was
comforted.
And two bright boys drew gravely near and saw the withered face,
And understood, with wondering awe, that death was in the place.

God's servant raised his dying eyes, filled with a strange sweet
bliss,
And he took the children in his arms as they bent to take his kiss ;
And then with overflowing heart he prayed, " My Father's God,
The angel which redeemed me when through evil ways I trod,

" Oh, bless the lads, and let them grow and be a multitude,
And show them evermore Thy love and always do them good."
And then his dying words were o'er and his solemn blessing
given,
And the old man passed away from earth to the promised land
in heaven.

But still his prayer goes daily forth, Oh, Father, bless the boys :
Their way is yet untrodden, and unlived life's griefs and joys ;
Their future fight is yet to win ; their story yet to tell ;
Oh, bless them, and they shall be blessed, and own that all is well

THE FIRST BIRTHDAY IN HEAVEN.

" WHAT shall we give him ? " the children said,
" His birthday is now so near.
Some glad surprise we must have for him,
To show him he still is dear."

And he, lest they should forget the day,
Had many a hint to give ;
And no one thought that our fair-haired boy
Had only a month to live.

But days ere the hoop or the skates were bought,
Or the book with the gilded page,
And before he could say with a boy's bright glee,
"I am now twelve years of age,"
There came a message to us below,
And we knew it was one of love,
That our boy must go from his earthly home
To the Father's house above.

So we keep the day with o'er-saddened hearts ;
For how can we help but miss
The joy of seeing his brightening eyes
At the birthday gift and kiss ?
And will not the sound of the merry bells,
And the voice of the children's play,
Remind us aye of our pain and loss
And the dear boy passed away ?

But we think again of the greater joy
He has in the better land,—
Perhaps his birthday will there be kept
With joy by the children band ;
He will not weep with the absent ones,
Where the tears are wiped away,
And we know in the streets of Jerusalem
There are boys and girls at play.

Will he get our message ? We cannot tell.
Will he know that we love him still ?
Oh, yes ; for nothing is wanting there,
His spirit with bliss to fill ;

And One is with him who died for him,
And He will attend our boy,
And the golden harp, and the crown of gold,
Will perfect his birthday joy.

And so we leave him. The Lord is good,
And we know that He doeth well ;
Though why He summoned the lad so soon
It is not for us to tell.
But we know in heaven, when the years no more
Are the herald of grief and pain,
The Father will gladden the parent-hearts
With the sight of their boy again.

THE EVEN-SONG.

THE children are growing weary,
The father is grave with care,
There are shadows on all our faces,
It is time for the evening prayer ;
And we know as we gather resting
By the dear home-hearth to-night,
The Father in heaven is waiting
To render our spirits light.

The baby is in the cradle,
And Winnie is safe in bed,
And Charlie is sleeping soundly
With the bright curls on his head ;
And we, as we wait together,
Have many a word to say
Of the news that abroad has reached us,
Of the work we have done to-day.

And then there is laid before us
A book that is old and worn,
Faded and marked in places,
But with none of its pages torn ;
A book that contains a record
Of life that has just begun,
And names of the best-beloved
Who the conqueror's crowns have won.

But not for the birth or bridal
Is the book brought out to-night,
But because as we sit in darkness
It comes as the dawn of light ;
And many a cheery message
We find from our Father there,
And we whisper a thankful answer
To Him in the after-prayer.

And then, for the day is over,
We have done with its loss and gain,
We have finished the hours of fighting,
And are glad to forget its pain,
We join in a song together
Of triumph and joy and peace,
To the loving and gentle Master
Who has bidden the day to cease.

Do you know, as we steal together,
Clasping the hands we love,
We have often a fireside vision
Of the Father's house above ?
How glad, when the tasks completed,
We shall be as we gladly come,
Not one of the voices missing,
To the even-song at home !

GREAT GRANDMAMMA. ★

SHE sits in the snuggest corner,
And has many a word to say
To the women and men who labour,
And the young who can only play.
We say she is getting childish,
For she laughs at the children's fun,
But I think she is mostly merry
Because of her life-tasks done.

Sometimes in the glow of the firelight
Her face has a happy smile ;
We watch and we often wonder
What pleasures her thoughts beguile ;
But she thinks of the long-departed
The while she is musing thus ;
And she whispers words fond and tender
That never were meant for us.

Oh, the flowers that have bloomed and faded
Since first in the " Lover's lane,"
She gathered the blue-eyed blossoms,
Making her meaning plain !
Oh, the snows that have come and melted
Since the winter of long ago,
When she plighted her troth to another,
To love him for weal or woe !

Oh, the miles that her feet have travelled !
Oh, the tasks that her hands have done,
And the pain she has had to suffer
Ere the rest and the peace are won !

I look in her face with wonder—
It is very serene and calm ;
And sometimes, when she thinks none listen,
She quavers a trustful psalm.

And I say, "Are you never weary
For the heaven that comes so late ?
Can you bless the delaying angel,
And the Master who bids you wait ?
For me, I am oft impatient,
Though the years of my life are few,
And I cannot be glad to labour
And wait for my rest, like you."

She smiles, as she speaks her answer :
"Sometimes I am weary, dear,
And often my heart is lonely,
For my darlings no longer here ;
But be sure that the loving Master
Will choose for us both the best—
The length of the day for labour,
And the hour for evening rest."

So she waits in the snuggest corner,
Away from the sharpest cold ;
She is ever content and patient,
She is dearer to us than gold.
But though we shall weep to miss her,
Whenever she goes away,
We shall say, when the Master calls her,
She is happy indeed that day.

TWENTY YEARS.

THE flowers were sweet and bright in Kentish lanes
On that "Good Friday" twenty years ago,
And to young hearts that knew no griefs nor pains
Life had a summer's pleasure to bestow :
Those written words, printed in black and white,
How strong they were to be ! how long to last !
What trusty helpers of the good and right !—
Thus hoped their writers in the days long past.

And so we found our way to homes afar,
And sought to nestle among household things ;
And ever since where merry children are
We have rejoiced to come and fold our wings ;
To whisper "Courage" to young hearts and strong,
And "Patience" to the burdened ones and sad,
And add a note to the soft evensong
Of those who rest in quiet and are glad.

To "live and love together" twenty years,
And yet be friends ; to bear and to forbear ;
To feel some pain ; perchance to shed some tears ;
And still in one another's thoughts to share ;
Still holding fast by Christian charity,
Kindly to judge and always hope the best,
To live in union, yet love liberty,—
This is to bless each other, and be blest.

In twenty years it would be strange indeed
If no mistakes were made, no wrong words said,
And those who would be teachers oft must plead
Their need to be themselves by wisdom led.

Yet have we striven to be true and brave ;
And helpful, if we might, to struggling men,
And bid them come to One, the strong to save,
Then turn to give their fellows joy again.

Twenty long years ! We are not here to-day
A band unbroken ! Some are with the dead ;
The ready writer's pen is laid away,
And God has made His servants comforted.
And many friends who read from week to week
The written words are dwelling with the King ;
They are not words of earth which now they seek,
Nor halting songs like ours which now they sing.

Hosts of new friends have risen. Some have grown
With this our growth ; and some have loved us late ;
God grant that all, the kindly, though unknown,
And we who linger yet for rest to wait,
May sit together at the Master's feet,
And learn fresh lessons of the Father's love,
Till, all life's labour done, at last we meet
And dwell together in one home above.

AT HOME FIRST.

" WE will meet some summer's day,
And will find along the way
Some calm Beulah where together we will talk of Him awhile :
We shall have good things to tell
Of the Father who does well
For the children who are happy, since they live beneath His smile.

“ You shall tell me, if with tears,
How the sorrows of long years
Are but written lines revealing all the sweetness of His love ;
I will answer that I know
How the darkest days of woe
May be fair as bright May mornings when He cometh from
above.

“ So together we will talk,
In some still, leaf-shaded walk,
Of the hand so strong and loving that has led us all the way ;
And we both will have to bring
Some glad tribute to the King,
And I know we shall be joyful when we meet that summer’s day.”

Such the words I sent my friend,
But before the winter’s end
I have had a written message that to her a call was given ;
And with all the haste of love
She has gladly gone above,
And has been the first to enter the full rest and joy of heaven.

When at last we two may meet,
’Twill be in some golden street,
With the bright sun shining on us in our own dear Fatherland ;
And we then will gladly say
All we meant to tell that day
Of the wise and tender guidance of the mighty Father’s hand.

She will know, as I do not,
That entrancing lighted spot,
Where the Saviour who has loved us has upreared “ the great
white throne ;”
She will teach me heavenly lore,
Happy one, gone on before
To the glory of the mansions Christ has ready for His own !

She is glad to reach home first,
And to join the songs that burst
From the liberated spirits who the King's fair beauty see ;
And we too, who longer stay,
Will go forth to hail that day
When the message from the Master comes to set us also free.

Then, when friends together meet
At the gentle Saviour's feet,
We shall have to tell each other more than here we ever guessed ;
For our eyes shall see His glory,
And our lips shall sing the story
Of the deep, unshadowed rapture of the hearts whom Christ has
blessed.

MOTHERS IN HEAVEN.

WE think of them around the throne,
The sorrow o'er, the tears all shed,
The victory gained, the work all done,
The life through suffering perfected ;
And we rejoice. And yet no year
Comes but we miss our mothers here.

When the young heart with joy beats high,
And love's entrancing tale is told,
Who does not wish the mother nigh
The tender secret to unfold ?
Who would not have life's dream of bliss
Sealed with the gentle mother-kiss ?

And afterward when life is grey,
And all the golden days are spent,
And summer roses fade away,
And the dull cloud of discontent
Hides God's great blessing from our ken,
How much we need our mothers then !

When the world offers its acclaim,
And magnifies our little good,
And hangs a wreath about our name,
And thinks our aims are understood,
'Twere sweet the mother-smile to raise
With " 'Tis *thy* child whom thus they praise."

And when it hurts us with its scorn
(This changeful world !), and bids us take
Hard blows, to make the days forlorn,
And punish failure and mistake ;
How it would comfort us to creep
To mother's arms and softly weep.

And when the aching eyes are dim,
And we are faint from life's great strain,
And cannot sing our evening hymn,
We are so tired of work and pain—
Oh, how we weary for the rest
We used to have on mother's breast !

And when two ways—the wrong and right—
Are spread before, and mists arise,
And we cry vainly for the light,
And mourn because we are not wise
To know them, then we long indeed
For mother's counsel in our need.

And yet, sometimes, it almost seems
That they are not so far away
But that they come to us in dreams,
Or bless us in the busy day,
And with soft angel-touches win
Our thoughts away from care and sin.

And then we ask, Now, who can tell
But ministering spirits sent
To weary hearts that love them well
Should sometimes be our mothers, lent
To us again, to make us glad,
And comfort, as of old, the sad?

But this we know : the mothers wait
A tender action to repeat,
For they will meet us at the gate,
And lead us to the Saviour's feet.
And how like home the mansion fair
Will be that has our mothers there !

And till we see them once again
Within our Father's house above,
This message comes to still the pain,
From Him who bears us wondrous love,
"As one whom mother comforteth
So will I comfort you till death."

A CHILD'S HYMN.

"Thou art the guide of my youth."

"LET the children come," Christ said.
Lord, my heart is comforted,
Safely shall my feet be led,
For Thou art guiding me.

I am but a little one ;
Nothing noble have I done,
No great victories have won,
Yet Thou art guiding me.

Saviour, choose the path I take,
Help me evil to forsake,
Me Thy little servant make
While Thou art guiding me.

Christ, the world is very strong,
Keep me from its ways of wrong,
Teach me now some heavenly song,
While Thou art guiding me.

Wheresoe'er the path shall lead,
Through rough road, or pleasant mead,
This shall meet my every need—
Thou, Lord, art guiding me.

Let me play about Thy feet,
Let me hear Thy whispers sweet,
Make my life in Thee complete,
Dear Saviour, guiding me.

Make me strong to do the right,
Let me work for Thee in light ;
And when fall the shades of night,
Still, still be guiding me.

Then, at last, when death shall be
As an angel sent for me,
Grant me Thy dear face to see,
Oh, Thou who guidest me.

A HUNDRED YEARS' MINISTRY.

A HUNDRED years two voices have been telling,
To listening ears, the story of Christ's love,
And wooing men to seek a lasting dwelling
In the calm sunshine of God's heaven above.

A century ago life's bread was broken
To hungry hearts that pressed around the place,
And knew the Christ by many a mystic token,
And saw, with faith's clear eyes, the Master's face.

A hundred years to tell the wondrous story !
A hundred years, and yet it is not told !
For more remains to tell of all *His* glory
Than heart can dream, or mortal lips unfold.

One voice began. A zealous youth, glad-hearted,
Went forth among the people with the Word ;
And worked until his strength had all departed,
And as an aged man he saw the Lord.

And when his voice grew silent in life's gloaming,
His son took up the sweet, unfinished strain,
And told the wanderers from the Father roaming,
How in His love they might have peace again.

And so twice fifty years have passed in pleasure,
Father and son declaring what they knew
About the Pearl of Price, the Hidden Treasure,
And the Home Mansions that they kept in view.

And hearing them, the hearts of men grew stronger,
And trembling lips essayed God's praise to sing ;
Tired arms were nerved to fight a little longer,
And strangers came and knelt before the King.

A hundred years, and God's love knew no failing !
A hundred years, and truth was ne'er ashamed !
A hundred years, and prayer was aye prevailing !
A hundred years, and Peace was still proclaimed !

Oh, let us all take courage from the story !
The Lord is better to us than our fears ;
And men shall feel His love and see His glory,
Until eternity shall crown the years.

"A HUNDRED YEARS FOR JESUS."

"A HUNDRED years for Jesus !" The white haired woman
smiled,

"I think I loved the Saviour when a little baby-child,
And ever through my girlhood, and into womanhood,
It was for Him I laboured, aye striving to be good ;
And to-morrow is my birthday. Yes, for one hundred years
My heart has clung to Jesus in this world of sin and tears."

"Long life the Lord has granted." "Yes, but to me it was not long,

He evermore has blessed me, and filled my days with song !
And they have sped so swiftly that the evening came full soon,
And I looked with eyes grown thankful on my life's still afternoon ;
And now it is the night-time, but I do not feel afraid—
The Lord my God is with me, and I shall not be dismayed."

"A hundred years for Jesus ! Did you wish to change at times ?
Did the service ever weary, like oft-repeated rhymes ?
Did you see another master, and wish to work for him ?"
But the aged woman lifted her eyes with tears made dim :
"Oh, none is like my Saviour ; I would serve Him yet again,
Had I years another hundred, for this world of sin and pain."

So the next day was her birthday. They went into her room,
And drew aside the curtains, that the day might chase the gloom ;
And the aged face was smiling with a pleasure not of earth ;
She had gone to share the gladness and the holy, endless mirth
Of the happy ones with Jesus in the land of endless song,
Where the servants rest and serve Him unto whom they all belong.

A hundred years for Jesus ! God grant that we may be
At last with those who serve Him through all eternity ;
We may not linger longer in this world of changeful scene,
Nor be His earthly servants as the aged saint had been,
But we will join our praises with the songs she learnt to sing,
And through unending ages will crown Him ever King.

THE MEETING-PLACE.

"They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

WE have our meetings ! glad holidays
Come sometimes in the parting ways,
And we come together, whose feet have been
In diverse paths through many a scene ;
But if we should count each other, then,
We sigh that we shall not meet again
The friends whose journey is safely o'er,
And whom we see upon earth no more.

But the Father's house ! Is it crowded yet ?
It holds the friends whom we ne'er forget ;
They have passed before to the joys of home,
And we who linger awhile shall come.
Unbroken families gather there,
And none is sad with a thought of care,
For at home shall be no vacant place,
Nor the pain of missing an absent face.

We search below for a treasure-trove,
Filled with riches, and health, and love ;
But the joy and gladness we long for here
Woo us for ever, yet disappear.
We spend in searching some weary years,
And solace our spirits with copious tears,
To find at the end no perfect rest
Till we take it there on the Father's breast.

But there where nothing shall spoil the song
That is sweetly raised by the happy throng,
The Master who dwells with His own has willed
That the yearnings of earth shall be all fulfilled.

The unanswered prayer, and the word of love,
And the unveiled face of the God above,
Shall be had to the full when our home is gained,
And joy and gladness shall be obtained.

We try to sing at the Master's feet,
Though the melody often is incomplete ;
Tears choke our voices and spoil the song,
And sorrow and sighing the wail prolong.
We see each other grow old with care,
We hear the sobs in the children's prayer,
And the burden is heavy, and long the night,
As we sit in the darkness and cry for light.

But at home there is nothing but perfect bliss
For those who have felt the welcome kiss ;
None weep for the strokes of the chastening rod,
The tears are dried by the hands of God,
And the glad, sweet songs of the ransomed rise
On the fragrant air through the cloudless skies ;
And there we shall sing through the whole long day,
For sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Let us patiently wait for a little while,
Till we live in the light of the Father's smile ;
Though the way be difficult, rough, and long,
We will cheer it as well as we can with song :
Love and mercy are round us here,
And soon will the gates of our home appear !
We shall grieve no more when we see His face,
And have safely come to our meeting-place !

IN THE SYNAGOGUE AT NAZARETH.

It was the Sabbath, and the people met
Within the synagogue to worship God
And hear the gracious promise of His Word :
For they were weary, as we are to-day,
Of all the sin and sorrow of the world,
And hoped to hear some message of His grace
Whose hand had blessed their fathers.

Down the street
With steadfast eyes, that, piercing through the skies,
Could see the Father's face, One passed along
Who looked upon the heavy-laden crowd
With pitying compassion. But a few
There were who knew Him ; unto all the rest
He was a stranger, and men closed their hearts
And coldly passed Him by, though He had come
To heal and save them. Yet He did not turn
In scorn away, but waited patiently
Until they recognised His mighty love,
And came that He might bless them.

He passed on
Into the synagogue, and presently
Stood up to read. And there was given to Him
Isaiah's prophecy, which, when He took,
He opened at the lesson for the day,
And read, with a significance that all could feel,
The words of hope. "*The Spirit of the Lord
Is on Me, for He hath anointed Me
To preach the Gospel to the poor ; and heal
The broken-hearted. Lo, I am to preach
Deliverance to the captives ; to the blind*"

*Recovering of sight; it is for Me
To set at liberty those who are bruised,
And preach the Lord's acceptable good year."*
He closed the book, and gave it back again
Unto the minister, and then sat down ;
But there was something in His searching eyes,
Or in the meaning tones with which He read,
That moved the people's hearts, and steadfastly,
With eager expectation on each face,
They looked at Him.

And presently His voice
Rang through the synagogue these startling words,
*"Behold, this day this Scripture is fulfilled
In your own ears !"*

And was it so, indeed ?
Was He the Comforter of all the sad ?
The Healer of their griefs ? Were His the hands
To set the prisoner free, and bind the wounds
Of all the broken-hearted ? Had He come
In mercy from the Father, to remain,
And live and die for all the sinful world
That knew Him not ?

A few there were
Who owned Him even then, and understood
The gracious words He spake. But we who hear
To-day kneel thankfully beside His feet,
And pour our love before Him. "Master, Christ,
We bless Thee, for Thou art the Comforter,
The Healer of our wounds, the Life and Light
Of this dark world. And Thou hast won our hearts
Unto Thyself, as on the Sabbath-day,
Within the synagogue at Nazareth
Thou causedst some to yield them to Thy love,
And taste below the blessedness of heaven."

THE ACCESSIBLE FRIEND.

"They said unto Him, Master, where dwellest Thou? He saith unto them, Come and see."

WHERE dwellest Thou, Master? men asked one day;
In the fields of light that are far away?
Dost Thou wander abroad in the mountain air?
Dost Thou hold with Thy Father communion there?
In some fair high palace dost Thou abide?
And away from the crowds dost Thou seek to hide?
May hearts that turn to Thee dare intrude
To break the calm of Thy solitude?

Wonderful Teacher, where dwellest Thou?
We have heard Thee speak, and we love Thee now.
We fain would follow where Thou dost lead,
And listen to Thee as the Christ indeed.
We are not satisfied but to see
Thy face in the crowd where we touch not Thee.
The longing is on us to know Thee well;
Wilt Thou tell us the secret where Thou dost dwell?

The Master turned with a smile so bright
That the seeking disciples were filled with light.
He said to them winningly, "Come and see,
For where I dwell may My servants be."
So they followed Him gladly, and stayed with Him,
Till the sweet hours passed, and the day was dim;
And they talked together, while each grew brave,
To live for Him who had come to save.

So gentle was He in His kind regard
That the friends went forth to the afterward
With loyal hearts that would cling to Him
If life henceforth were bright or dim.

For they said, The Master indeed is good ;
And they told His love to the multitude.
And whenever they longed with the Lord to be,
They heard His whisper, Oh, come and see.

And we who sigh for His love to-day,
Know that He never will turn away
One wistful soul that would share His love
And pass with Him to the home above.
We may come to Him—nay, He comes to us :
We may hear Him tenderly pleading thus :
Whatever the burden of life may be,
Weary and laden ones, come to Me.

Let us come at once, and for aye abide ;
Let us talk with Him in the eventide,
And rise with Him in the morning light,
And rest in His favour through all the night.
He will love us and lead us till grief be o'er,
And we stand with Him on the shining shore,
And say, Where Thou dwellest, oh, let us be ;
And He welcomes us home with this " Come and see."

THE MASTER'S INVITATION.

HE looked on the people borne down by their care,
And the marks of the tempter He saw everywhere,
He knew of their sorrow, He pitied their grief,
And His heart yearned in mercy to give them relief.

He told them of strength in the right to endure,
He told them of healing, and this was the cure,
This the blessing to cheer them, the power to set free,
" Oh, ye weary and laden ones, come unto Me."

They heard Him who mournfully paced through the street,
And they for whom life could no longer be sweet,
And they who were bowed by the weight of their sin,
And they who saw heaven but entered not in.

They heard Him, and some from the wondering crowd
Drew near to His feet, and besought Him aloud
For healing and pity. Nor turned He away
From any who prayed Him by night or by day.

His voice caused the storm and its ragings to cease,
His voice bade the penitent go into peace,
He healed all the sick, and the hungry He fed,
And His word in its power gave life to the dead.

And He now is the same as in far-away days ;
His children He guides through the earth's dubious ways ;
He heals, and gives life unto all who believe,
And as many as come shall a welcome receive.

Let us hear Him invite us and gladly attend,
We shall find Him a loving, an unfailing Friend ;
He will give us each day some new token of grace,
And at last make our home in His heavenly place.

THE STORM.

THE sun shone down on the inland sea,
The waters blue of the Galilee ;
And the Saviour, tired of the heat of the day,
And wearily longing to move away

To the lonely spot on the eastern shore,
Now His sermon on sowing and seed was o'er,
Stepped in the boat in the eventide,
And began to sail toward the distant side.

Yet He waited awhile, for a voice was heard,
"Wherever Thou goest I follow, Lord ;"
But the Master smiled as He read that heart :
"Foxes have holes, but a lonely part
Is his who follows where I must tread,
For I have not where to lay My head."
Then another spake, "Lord, before I come,
Let me linger a season to mourn at home ;"
But the Saviour turned to the darkening sea,
"He must leave all things who would follow Me."

At last, away from the pressing crowd,
And the din of the voices, shrill and loud,
The weary Master has closed His eyes,
And deeply asleep in the boat He lies.
Rest has come to the busy hands,
Ready aye for all prayer demands ;
Rest to the lips, and the blistered feet
That have patiently walked through the dust and heat.

So soundly He sleeps that He does not hear
The disciples first utter the sounds of fear ;
He is not disturbed by the rocking boat,
Which scarcely His servants can keep afloat ;
And the dashing waves, and the wild wind's sighs
Do not awake Him, until the cries
Of His frightened children have reached His ears,
And He speaks the word to dispel their fears.

"Where is your faith ? Be not afraid ;"
And lo ! no longer distressed, dismayed,
They see Him look at the raging sea,
And His "Peace, be still," brings tranquillity.

And e'en the disciples who know Him best,
Seeing the waters in sudden rest,
Whisper together, "What Man is He
That is thus obeyed by the mighty sea?"

Oh, gracious Jesus ! where flow to-day
The summer waves in the tranquil bay,
The glad crowds gather, and think again
Of Thy wondrous life in this world of pain ;
And the prayer uprises, "O God of love,
Speak the words once more from Thy throne above,
And bid the storms of the world to cease ;
For who can make war when Thou givest Peace?"

WILL HE HEAR?

THE children were gathered together
In the light of the fading day,
And the noise of the stormy weather
Came through the leafless way ;
They looked at their teacher, smiling,
"We are safe from the wind and rain,
And God will take care of the children,
And He will not give us pain."

Then, as if He were testing
The faith of the little child,
Through the silence there came a rushing,
And the winds were loose and wild ;
They tore the roof and the windows,
And shook the tottering wall,
And down where the children trembled
Came the stones in a fearful fall.

The blinding of dust, the tumult,
The sound of an awful crash
Came on the shrinking children
Swift as the lightning's flash ;
And then there was death-like silence,
Till a scholar, prisoned there,
Sent up to the God of heaven
The voice of an anguished prayer.

"O God, Thou didst take Thy servant
And all in the ship one day,
Through the terrible stormy weather
To the land that near them lay ;
And we all are in equal danger,
O God, who art standing near,
Deliver the suffering children"—
Then he waited, "Will He hear ?"

Men's spirits were moved to anguish,
And workmen with willing hands
Came hastening near in pity,
And, forming themselves in bands,
Strove with their might to rescue
Those who were buried there,
And who heard their cheerful voices
Bidding them not despair.

They worked till the task was over,
Through the whole of the stormy night,
Till the dawn of the winter's morning
Came with its faint, grey light ;
And then with a glad thanksgiving
They counted the children there,
And only the boy was missing,
Who had sent to heaven his prayer.

Late in the day they found him
Fainting and almost dead,
But his face was strangely tranquil,
And he smiled as they raised his head :
“ I am going to be with Jesus,
He hears when the children call ;
Do you say He has saved the others ?
I am safest of them all.”

Then he passed to the land of summer,
Away from the wind and rain,
And never the touch of sorrow
Shall darken his life again ;
He is safe from the stormy weather,
With the King he had learned to love,
And he waits for the other classmates
In the higher school above.

UNDERSTOOD.

“ As My Father hath sent Me into the world, even so send I you.”—JESUS.

THE sun lit up the bright Corinthian brass
Of the Gate Beautiful, until it glowed and gleamed,
And drew admiring eyes upon itself.
The rays fell softly on the shrinking form
Of a lame man, whose daily couch was there
Among the porches. As he turned to look,
Made drowsy by the summer afternoon,
He saw two men approaching, whose grave eyes
Seemed looking on some memory-picture fair
That held them so they scarcely cared to see
The temple and its glitter. One perchance

Saw the blue sea, and, walking there, the form
 Of the great King most passionately loved,
 Though afterward denied, whose voice said, Come,
 Whereat the fisher's coat was cast aside,
 And in the eagerness of faith and love
 He went to meet the Lord. The other one
 May have grown quiet with a pensive joy
 The while he thought upon some sacred hours
 Spent close beside his Master ; and the past
 Lighted the present with a strange, sweet bliss,
 While Hope spoke softly of another time
 And happier communion.

“ Give to me !

For I am lame ! ”

So broke a startling voice
 Upon their musings. Looking down, they met
 The appealing glance of one too used to pain
 And pitiless contempt, whose weary eyes
 Grew restless for the good he hoped to gain
 From the apostles. But what could they give ?
 The moneys brought and laid before their feet
 Were not their own, and they were yet poor men,
 Whose fisher-nets lay idle on the beach,
 And in whose purse reposed no sounding coin.
 But as they thought of this, another thought
 Stole through their minds. “ Gave not the Spirit power ;
 Said not the Master we should heal the sick
 If we had faith ? Will He not keep His word ?
 If we presume upon it, will not He
 Put might into our hands ? ” A smile of hope
 Brightened the eyes that met the other's gaze,
 And Peter, growing bold and confident,
 Said, “ Look on us.” The man held out his hand,
 But drew it back, with disappointed air,
 At the next words he heard. “ Silver and gold
 I have not, but I bid you in the name
 Of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up,
 And walk.”

The man grew white and wild with hope,
And with a panting pain of eagerness
He struggled to his feet, and lo ! strange strength
Came to his ankles, and he leaped for joy,
And, praising God, he clasped his arms about
His healers, while the watching, wondering crowd
Pressed near to see the sight.

The day wore on,
And strong, brave words were spoken to the host
Of Him whose power had made the lame man whole,
And of their guilt who crucified the King,
And of His resurrection from the dead,
And wish to save them.

Then the shadows fell,
And they who had been busy all the day
Rested in prison whither violent hands
Conveyed them as the payment for their deed
Of blessing.

Were their spirits sad ?
Talked they of silence in the scornful world ?
Of leaving other lame men to their fate,
And ignorant men to blindness ? Nay, they thought
Of Jesus' words, and understood at length
That they, the legacy He left the world,
Were to be meek and lowly like their Lord,
Blessing the cursing lips, and patiently
Drinking the cup of sorrow. So they came
Forth from the prison cell, to work and bear,
And if He bade, to die, as He had done,
For very love of those who hated them.

Do we so understand the Master's words ?

THE NEW LIFE.

“ You hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins.”

YE were dead, for ye saw in the Saviour's face
No matchless beauty, no wondrous grace ;
To you no music was in His word,
You never joyfully called Him Lord,
You went your way in the paths of sin,
And cared not a glad new life to win.

But you hath He quickened. He touched your eyes,
And spoke the miraculous word “ Arise.”
And now you join in the song they sing,
Who gratefully own Him their Lord and King ;
And you see His beauty, and evermore
The great Life-giver your hearts adore.

Now what shall sadden your happy days ?
Your path is straight in the pleasant ways.
Your hearts are light and your hands are free
To work for the Master constantly,
And every day has a new bright song,
To Him who is leading the flowers among.

Your Friend is watching the way you take ;
And He will never your life forsake ;
He crowns the year with its wealth of good,
He sends the harvest of plenteous food ;
You have not a sorrow He does not share,
And He folds you close in His tender care.

Therefore, forgetting the old dark way,
Live in the light of His blessed day ;
Let not the evil be in you yet,
Give up the darkness without regret ;
Serve Him for ever, and praises bring
To the feet of Him who is Lord and King.

THE ASSEMBLY.

“ These are they which came out of great tribulation.”

No one could number the mighty crowd
That gathered together and sang aloud
Songs of salvation. They came in bands
From all the quarters of distant lands,
And some of the faces were dark as night,
Though all were brightened with wondrous light ;
And gladly before the Lamb they came,
Thinking only of His good name.

Men were there who for many years
Had lived and toiled in the vale of tears ;
Some had come from earth's noise and rush,
Swiftly to enter heaven's sacred hush ;
Some had come with the love of truth,
That dwells in the bosoms of happy youth ;
And some were babes from their mother's arms,
Early taken from earth's alarms.

But now, together, the young and old,
As they pace the streets that are paved with gold,
Are singing in chorus the glad new song,
To Him who redeemed, and has loved them long ;

And the angels join in the solemn hymn,
As they see His glory, which naught can dim ;
And the triumph is swelling with every hour :
"To God be glory, and might, and power."

But what of these in white robes arrayed ?
They were often weary and oft dismayed,
They walked in the shadows and knew no light
While lasted the desolate, dreary night ;
But they washed their robes, and are free from stain,
In the land that knoweth not grief nor pain ;
The sorrow is over ; and now, through grace,
They look on the Master's beloved face.

Oh, blest assembly ! We wait below,
Longing for ever your joy to know ;
But very soon we shall swell your ranks,
And join in your jubilant psalms of thanks.
In tribulation we labour yet,
But the King will never our state forget ;
And though to the wistful the time is long,
We are hopefully learning your happy song.

THE WEEK OF PRAYER.

FROM north to south, from east to west,
The cry goes up the whole day long,
In fervent prayer, or pleading song,
"Oh, bless us, and we shall be blest."

In silent thought, or spoken word,
In winter's early morning gloom,
Or when eve's shades are in the room,
The people pray, "Oh, bless us, Lord."

Nor pray they for themselves alone,
But, moved by tender sympathy,
They bring their children lovingly
Before the mighty Father's throne.

For them they cry, for them they plead,
That God will bless them in His love ;
And guide them to His home above,
And help them ever in their need.

And most that He may teach them now,
Before their days are spoiled by sin,
How they the unfading crown may win,
And wear it humbly on their brow.

So that to His most glorious praise
The children's lives may all be given,
That they may live the life of heaven
The while they pass these earthly days.

And He who bends His ears doth know
How earnestly the loving prayer
For little ones in Christian care
Arises from these hearts below.

And He will sanctify the year,
And hosts of children shall be taught
To seek His face, and early brought
To serve Him in their places here.

And thus this week of prayerful days
Shall many a gift of blessing bring,
And glad allegiance to our King,
Until the prayer be turned to praise.

THE SONG OF THE JUBILEE SINGERS.

“ Steal away, steal away,
 Steal away to Jesus ;
 Steal away, steal away home,
 I ha'n't got long to stay here.”

BROTHERS, preaching by sweet song,
 Do you see amid the throng
 Of the friendly, up-turned faces many eyes with tear-drops dim ?
 Do you see how hearts are stirred
 At the mention of that word,
 And that even through the music thoughts are stealing off to Him ?

Oh ! we think how long ago,
 In their times of deepest woe,
 The slave-mothers had the solace which the thought of Him could
 bring ;

As among the toilsome canes,
 Or abroad on scorching plains,
 They would often sing together in soft notes about the King.

And we wonder—we, who stand
 In our dear, exalted land—
 How our hearts could bear the burdens which are aye upon us laid
 If we could not steal away
 From the stress of every day,
 For a little time with Jesus lest our souls should be dismayed.

And we think of all the places
 Where you meet but stranger faces,
 And where unfamiliar voices fall alone upon your ears ;
 And you would be sad indeed
 With unutterable need,
 If you could not steal away to your Friend of many years.

So we thank the King with you,
For we love and trust Him too,
That to us and to our fathers He is evermore the same ;
And that strangers from all lands
Love each other and join hands,
Since our hearts have been united by the sweetness of His name.

So we hail you free indeed,
And we bid you all God-speed,
As you go to sing for Jesus to the crowds who flock to hear.
You may reach the hearts of some
Who have yet delayed to come,
And your songs of Him shall win them for the Christ you hold so
dear.

Friends, we thank you for your song,
And are glad 'twill not be long
Ere we meet and dwell together in the Father's bright home-place.
And we'll often steal away,
Since we have not long to stay,
And will find our joy in Jesus till we see Him face to face.

OUR FATHER.

THE JUBILEE SINGERS' PRAYER.

IN the hush that falls all-suddenly upon the waiting crowd
There floats serenely through the room the songs—some low,
some loud ;
They bid the listeners "steal away to Jesus" in the night,
They "roll through an unfriendly world" to the heavenly rest and
light,
They "view the land," and gladly tell that the singers are redeemed,
But to my heart the chanted prayer has aye the sweetest seemed

"Our Father"—ours and theirs always ! The family is great,
And some have early known His name, and some have loved Him
late ;

And some have lived in sunny climes, and some in lands of snow ;
Some lives pass on in pleasantness, and some are sad with woe ;
But the children, wheresoe'er they be, and with faces dark or pale,
Have hearts that join the singers' chant, and the Lord "our
Father" hail.

And "Hallowed be our Father's name, Thy kingdom come," they
sing,

"Thy will be done on earth, in heaven Thy will, for Thou art
King ;"

They know His will has made them free, and they are free indeed,
And in His kingdom, when it comes, shall be nor sin nor need ;
And we are glad to join their prayer—"Thy kingdom come," we say,
And all the bondage and the care from earth shall pass away.

"Give us each day our daily bread." They know the Shepherd's
care,

They wandered through a wilderness, and food came to their
prayer ;

They know and love the Father's hand who in all lands has fed,
And given to the cry of want the meed of daily bread ;
And we will join that prayer of theirs, God give for every day
His food for body and for soul while we pass along the way.

"Forgive our trespasses, as we forgive our trespassers"—

Ah ! we in happy England have not known such wrongs as theirs ;
Babes stolen from their mothers' breasts, slaves beaten in the sun !
And yet they dare to cry, Forgive us, Lord, as we have done !
Have they not learned their lessons of the blessed Prince of Peace ?
God grant that in their hearts and ours that kingdom may increase !

"Into temptation lead us not ; deliver us from ill :"

The cry goes up, and English hearts echo their pleading still ;

For we are weak and life is hard, and though we love the right,
We need a Father's gentle hand to keep us in the light.
Hear Thou the prayer our brothers raise, for, Lord, it is our own,
And let new strength and courage come, since they are Thy gifts
alone.

“Thine is the kingdom, Thine the power, Thine shall the
glory be,”—
So, Father, coloured men and white must close their prayer to
Thee ;
Thou hast redeemed our souls from death, and taught our lips
to sing,
And hand in hand the black and white their thankful offerings
bring ;
And when within our Father's house together we shall be,
We'll sing the songs of Jubilee for ever unto Thee.

ONE DAY IN SEVEN.

WE thank Thee, Father ! Thy loving thought,
Knowing Thy children's share
In the world where daily their hands have wrought,
While their hearts were sad with care,
Hast for their rest and comfort given
One day in seven.

In the week they are busy through all the days,
And they sigh for the rest of night ;
Short time have they for their songs of praise,
Or to dream of the Land of Light ;
And what would they do if Thou hadst not given
One day in seven ?

One day to bask in the Father's love,
And listen while He shall speak ;
One day to think of the home above,
The haven of all the meek ;
And thank Him ever that He has given
This day in seven.

One day we walk in the glad, green fields,
And join with the merry bird
In her song for the pleasure the summer yields,
And kneel when the heart is stirred ;
And so is the spirit brought nearer heaven,
One day in seven.

We should lose our ardour, and miss our peace,
And life grow grey and sad,
If the Sabbath music should die and cease,
Nor its songs should make us glad ;
So we bless our God that His love has given
This day in seven.

We are passing on to another life,
In a brighter, fairer home,
Which is never darkened by sin and strife,
For no distress may come ;
And there to Him shall all days be given,
Not one in seven.

THE FIRST MISSIONARIES.

“LORD, what wilt Thou have me to do?”
Once again, as at first, the low prayer
Of him who Christ's will would pursue,
Rising heavenward, is filling the air ;
And others are waiting with him
Till the wish of the Highest is known,
And then with a zeal naught can dim,
They all will serve Jesus alone.

So they wait and pray on, day by day,
Some work cometh aye to their hands,
But a voice shall soon call them away
To new work in the far-distant lands.
His servants most willingly wait ;
They will toil in the day or the night ;
For at last when the hour has grown late
The Spirit will give them new light.

And it comes ! To the isle in the sea,
Where wistful eyes long for His face,
And to hearts that now desolate be
Shall be carried good tidings of grace ;
And the men who are ready to go
Shall be messengers, sent by the King
To the regions of darkness and woe,
The light of His Gospel to bring.

So they are the first of the band
That firm through all ages shall be,
Going forth into every lone land,
Till the nations Christ's glory shall see.

And others shall follow their zeal,
 Shall labour, shall wait, and shall pray,
 Till the Spirit His will shall reveal,
 And they pass through the sunlighted way.

* * * * *

The years have gone by like a dream,
 But His servants are working on still,
 They watch for His day-star to gleam,
 They listen to learn His good will ;
 And then with swift feet do they go,
 Nor care be the way bright or dim,
 Christ crucified only they know,
 And they gladly live wholly for Him.

DESIRING KNOWLEDGE.

“ They besought that these words might be preached to them the next Sabbath.”

“ LET us hear them again ! ” They had waited yet,
 And had heard the words they would not forget,
 While the angry Jews, each with scornful face,
 Had risen in wrath and left the place.
 But these had lingered ; they could not go
 While more of the wonders they hoped to know ;
 For Paul was speaking of Christ the King,
 And they felt the power that His name could bring.

“ Tell us yet more,” so the Gentiles cried,
 “ Of the Nazarene who was crucified ;
 Let us learn how the prophets wrote of Him,
 In the far-off days when the light was dim.

Make us understand what the Lord would say
To us who live in this wondrous day,
And if He be the King foretold,
We will trust Him yet with a courage bold.

“Do not be silent. If through the week
Of these wondrous tidings ye may not speak,
When next shall visit this world of ours,
The peaceful calm of the Sabbath hours,
Tell us again of the glad, good news
Which is scorned by the unbelieving Jews ;
And we will come to His mighty feet
In whom the manhood and Godhead meet.”

So they kept in their hearts through the days that came
The glad, sweet music of Jesus' name,
They talked of the things they had seen and heard,
And lost no part of the preacher's word ;
And at last when the Sabbath came again,
With its gift of peace for the world of pain,
They had learned fresh lessons of His great love,
Who had come to earth from His home above.

“Tell us yet more,” we cry to-day,
“For we need the teaching as much as they ;
Let us see the beauty of Christ the Lord,
Let our hearts rejoice in His gracious word.
We do not reject Him. We long to bring
Ourselves, our all, unto Christ the King,
And would ever be learning of His rich grace,
Till at last we see Him face to face.”

PAUL'S VISION.

"I have much people in this city."

THE City of Corinth was fair in the sun,
Where wealth might be gathered and fame might be won ;
And the breezes blew softly there over the sea,
Where the ships on the water were joyously free.

To the city came strangers from every far shore,
And one watched the people, and prayed evermore ;
He loved them for Him who had died on the cross,
And for knowledge of Him counted all things but loss.

Would they listen, he asked, to the message he brought ?
His mission had ever with danger been fraught ;
And he, the brave-hearted, although not dismayed,
Yet halted a moment, of failure afraid.

But a voice came to him in the silence of night,
That filled him with courage and hope and delight ;
"Do not fear, I am with thee ; speak on in My name ;
Be bold yet again, and My Gospel proclaim.

"For lo, in this city much people have I,
Who daily before Me for righteousness cry ;
And no man shall hurt thee, but all shall be well,
While the tale of My love thou shalt constantly tell."

Oh, King of Thy people, we thank Thee to-day,
For the cities are many of which Thou dost say
That Thy children are there. Let the time soon appear
When to all in Thy world Thy great name shall be dear.

"AWAY WITH HIM."

(ACTS xxi. 36.)

THAT which he dreaded has come to pass !
He looks abroad on the angry mass.
With passionate faces and flashing eyes
The people are shouting their hungry cries,—
They will have his life, they will beat him down,
They will give the apostle the martyr's crown.

But Paul stands bravely and does not fear
As the lying accusers are pressing near,
His heart is kept in a deep repose
As his body shrinks from the cruel blows ;
The Lord is with him, *He* makes him strong
Who gave him in prison a midnight song.

The yells are increasing, " Away with him ! "
They hasten him up the staircase dim ;
But he waits a moment. The cry they raise
Makes him think of the former days,
When they hunted the Master he loved away,
With the same wild cry which they raise to-day.

With Him he suffers ! Paul's face is bright,
For the memory brings him a happy light :
With undaunted courage he sees the crowd,
And does not care for the voices loud ;
He lifts his hand, he will give them yet
Words of Him they will not forget.

Oh, wonderful Master ! A thought of Thee
Will comfort Thy children where'er they be.

We take Thy words to our hearts to-day,
We tread a lighted and pleasant way ;
But if sorrow should come, Thou wilt make us strong,
For Thou art with us the whole life long.

NIGHT IN THE CASTLE.

THE day at last was ended. The great strain
On the apostle might be loosened now ;
And all the anxious thought that had been his,
And the keen gaze that watched his bitter foes,
And his great pain and care to say right words
At the right time might be relaxed, and he
Be free to rest.

And yet, how could he rest ?
Before his eyes again the faces came,
And he could see, flashing with rage and hate,
The eyes that once, and not so long ago,
Had beamed with friendly light, but now had changed,
As hearts had changed. Paul thought him, in the dusk,
Of when the Martyr Stephen stood before
The council, and himself had with the rest
Passed the death-sentence. Then he thought, again,
Of how to-day the angry men that were
His late companions glared on him in rage,
And thirsted for his life.

A smile would break
Over the weary face, as he recalled
The happy thought that, flashing through his mind,
Had made him set the Pharisees against
The Sadducees, and so turn from himself

The gathering storm. And yet full well he knew
'Twas but a moment's respite. He must meet
Another day the trouble and the strife ;
Perchance, indeed, he had a violent death
Before him ; and the future, dark as night,
Held up no sunny prospects.

But a Voice

He knew and loved spoke to him through the gloom ;
He lifted up his eyes, and at his side,
Behold, the Saviour stood ! Paul's hour of need
Had brought the Comforter, and He who once
Had said in gentle tones, " Saul, why dost thou
Persecute Me ? " said now, " Be of good cheer,
For thou, who ever hast been brave and strong
To testify of Me among the Jews
Here in Jerusalem, shalt also go
To Rome, and witness there."

Lo, suddenly

The night was gone ! The Light of all the world
Shone in the castle-fortress, and Paul's heart
Grew light and strong, because he saw the Lord.

AN HOUR IN A LIFE.

(ACTS xvi. 25—33.)

A MAN was sleeping. And he dreamed that night
Of strangely solemn music, which uprose,
And mingled with the choruses of heaven,
Although the singers were but humble folks
Upon the earth. And in his dream he heard

Voices of men in prayer, who spoke to God
As if He were their Father, and His Son
Their Friend and Saviour. But across his dream
There came an awful tumult ; for the earth
Upheaved, and a dull, thunderous sound was heard,
While the foundations of the mighty house
Were shaken, and the strong high walls bent down
As if they would have fallen. Suddenly
The man awoke, and, springing to his feet,
Recalled the facts and circumstance of life
By which he was surrounded. Where was he ?
Within the gaol at Philippi. And whom ?
The gaoler still. The midnight hour was dark,
But the familiar objects round were felt,
And he remembered how the palace towers
And pilasters of marble would shine out
Soon as the day should break ; and how the sun
Would light the waters of the Ægean Sea
When the to-morrow came. But now ? Ah, now
He trembles and turns pale. The prison doors
Are open to the night ; and the loose bands
That held the prisoners fast are scattered near,
And with a rush of fear his mind recalls
The evil to himself, if while he slept
The prisoners have escaped. Have they not gone ?
The doors are open ; surely they are fled !
And, panic-stricken, turns he to his sword,
When, suddenly, a loud and startling voice
Rings through the silence, " Do thyself no harm,
For we are here."

The dream must have been true !
The singers were the followers of Him,
The Nazarene, the Crucified, whom men
Reviled and hated still ; who for their love
And boldness had been scourged, and in the stocks
Set fast. An hour ago he would have given
These men no pity ; but a gleam of light

Had come to him, and hastening to their cell
With torch in hand, he swiftly brought them out,
Crying, "I would be saved ; what must I do ?"
Straightway the singers thought not of their wounds,
But with a joyful voice they healed the man
Of his distress with simple words of power.
" Believe," they said, " on the Lord Jesus Christ,
Thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house with thee.

The hour was passing, such an hour as comes
But to few lives ! The man, eager and glad,
Brought all his household, and while others slept
They listened to a sermon, short but clear,
And saw that He who died, and rose again,
Whose words had made the prison doors stand wide
For His imprisoned servants, was indeed
The Lord and the Messiah ; and their love
Sprang into being with their fealty,
And they became disciples.

That same hour,
While men were sleeping in Philippian homes,
The gaoler washed the prisoners' stripes ; and he
And all his house believed and were baptized.

That was *the* hour of life, whose memory
Would last through all the years, and be renewed
Throughout eternity.

THE ALTAR TO THE UNKNOWN GOD.

"THERE is Some One else ! All our gods are here,
And we worship them daily in pain and fear.
We would not forget them ; we bow our knees,
And seek by our offerings each to please.
But we feel that our altars are all too few :
There's another God, if we only knew.

"Can you not see in the painted flower
The proofs of His mighty and kindly power?
Do you know the sound of His gentle voice
Which maketh the morn and the eve rejoice ?
The birds are singing their songs to Him,
And we feel Him near when the night is dim.

"We hear Him walk in the cool of day,
He chases the shades of the night away,
He calls the flowers into glad new life,
He speaks and hushes the wild wind's strife ;
Great is this God, let us therefore raise
An altar meet for the Unknown's praise."

So they built their altar, and set thereon
No name of Him whom they had not known ;
They bowed and worshipped with words of prayer,
And asked sometimes if the God were there ;
For what could they know of the Highest's grace,
And how could they picture His smiling face ?

But unto their city His servant came,
And he spoke to them of a wondrous Name ;


He told of the Christ who had lived and died ;
The Friend, the King, and the Crucified,
And some had faith, and they sought His throne,
The God of Mercy before unknown.

A PARTING.

A LITTLE ship in the harbour lay,
And a knot of earnest men
Pressed close to the teacher whom they loved,
And heard his voice again.
And they looked at the face that was growing old,
Till his portrait was in each heart,
And sad tears gathered within their eyes,
For the time had come to part.

“Bear me record,” the teacher said,
“I have faithfully lived and wrought ;
Of all that the Spirit has given me,
I have hindered and kept back naught.
I have borne and striven, have prayed and wept,
And now I am going, bound,
Not knowing all that shall come to me,
But that griefs and pains are found.

“Yet, if I may finish my course with joy,
I care for none of these,
And behold I have shunned not to tell you all,
Seeking my God to please.
Now, therefore, take heed of the grievous wolves,
And remember the three long years
When I ceased not to warn you by night and day,
Even with prayers and tears.



“ And now I commend you to God’s good grace.
Remember, for His dear sake,
The Master’s word, More blessed it is
To give than it is to take.”
Then he knelt beside them, and prayed for all,
And they watched him sail away,
Weeping because they might see no more
The face they had seen that day.

And alas ! for us when our partings come,
Had we no home on high,
But our friends beloved do but pass away
To their rest beyond the sky ;
And there His servants with joy and song
Shall happily meet again,
Forgetting the sorrows of other days
And the bitter parting pain.

PAUL’S JOURNEY.

WHERE the cliffs were green with the buds of spring,
And the sun touched gently each growing thing,
Where the light crept over the smiling shore,
And the storms of the winter raged no more,
The traveller looked with a half sad smile,
For scarce could these beauties his thoughts beguile.

He had friends to love him and work to do,
And the prize of glory to keep in view,
The Holy City was fair and bright
In the calm repose of the spring’s sweet light ;
And his thoughts flew thither, before his face
Saw the signs of the longed-for place.

The full moon shone on the vessel's way,
When the evening followed the fading day,
And the ocean's murmur became a psalm
As it moved serenely with bosom calm,
But sea nor landscape could make him glad,
For seeing the future his heart was sad.

God had whispered of coming ill,
And though His servant adored His will,
He shrank from the gloom of the prison cell,
And the stripes whose torture he knew too well.
Yet he rested still in the Father's care,
And stayed his soul upon God in prayer.

And we know that He would his joy increase,
With His wonderful healing gift of peace.
The strength He needed would surely come,
And at last the bliss of the heavenly home ;
For though the heart may be tossed with fear,
No harm can come with the Master near.

ALMOST PERSUADED.

Two men there are. The one is strong in right,
His heart is brave, although he is in chains.
His eyes look on the other, and a light
Flashes through them, and for a while remains.
The king is moved to speak an honest word,
Though yet he does not serve the prisoner's Lord.

"They are all true," he thinks, "these words of his,
And I am wrong who turn my face away
From light and perfect purity and bliss,
That dwell where'er the Nazarene has sway.
But I? I dare not serve Him for my sin;
My heart is all too hard for Him to win."

The other, pressing him more closely sees
The wavering of his soul. "Oh, would to God
Thou mightest decide," he cries. But words like these
Touch the weak king too closely. With a nod
The others understand, he gains his feet
And moves away, the work still incomplete.

And so, "almost persuaded," comes to naught;
The king shall not receive the crown of life!
'Within his heart no glorious change is wrought
He still is tossed about by sin and strife,
He has not come to Christ, nor found His rest,
He will remain unhappy and unblest.

Oh ye who read the story, do you see
How but "almost persuaded" serves you not?
Decide for Jesus. His disciples be,
And He will cast His brightness o'er your lot,
And bid the strife and sin for aye to cease,
And guide you gently through the path of peace.

WHOSE I AM AND WHOM I SERVE."

To the faces white with fear
Turned he his watchful eyes,
Then raised them, until they saw
Far through the stormy skies.

He looked on the Father's face
Smiling down from above,
Till his heart grew strangely calm
As he read His gracious love.

He knew he was not his own !
Bought by his Master's death,
Destined to share His throne,
What mattered the passing breath
He would die for his gracious Lord,—
Was not the prize in sight ?
But the King had sent him a word
To comfort him in the night.

He was safe though the storm was strong—
The God of the worlds was his ;
He could cheerily sing his song
To the wild wind's symphonies.
He was tossed by the angry waves,
But he felt not their mad alarms ;
They might open their darksome graves,
But he clung to his Father's arms.

Oh, never, in fiercest strife,
Would the servant forsaken be ;
He walked in "the path of life,"
E'en on the raging sea.
And though dangers might thickly crowd,
He could still in the King rejoice,
And hear, through the tempest loud,
The sound of His still small voice.

So the heart of the man was still.
The winds and the foaming sea
Would the will of his Lord fulfil,
And all things for good should be.

Then he gave to the frightened men
The message the Lord had sent ;
And they rallied to hope again,
Though their courage was well-nigh spent.

Oh, ye, who still face the storm,
Desolate, weak, alone,
Away from the shelter warm
Which God's children have made their own,
Will ye not come to Him ?
The refuge is very sure ;
Serve Him until life grows dim,
And His mercy will aye endure.

AND WISHED FOR THE DAY.

THEY heard the booming waters,
But they could not see the strife
Of the angry waves that wrestled
And the surf with danger rife :
They could not tell what sorrow,
What anguish or dismay,
Would come with their to-morrow,
But still they wished for day.

It might be that the billows
Should be their open graves,
And their ever-restless pillows
Be made of heaving waves ;
But the sailors had a promise,
And Hope resumed its sway,
So they braced themselves to action,
And waited for the day.

And, when across the waters,
 Passed the dreary shades of night,
And upward from the eastern
 Came the welcome dawn of light,
Their hearts grew glad with pleasure
 For they saw the distant strand,
And the ship went bounding onward,
 While they hoped to reach the land.

The day was full of trouble,
 Of fighting, and of fears,
Of struggling in the waters,
 While the hours seemed almost years
But at length the toil was over,
 And the danger safely past,
And Paul and his companions
 Had reached the land at last.

Ah ! often we are sailing
 Across the stormy sea,
And our hearts are filled with terror
 Of the evils that may be ;
But with eyes to Him uplifted,
 To the God of strength we pray,
And then we wait with longing
 For the dawning of the day.

And at last the rough life over,
 The tempests hushed to sleep,
We shall safely reach our dwelling
 Where God's children cease to weep,
And there with joy and praises
 Shall find ourselves at length
With the toil and struggles over
 In the land of light and strength.

THE MEETING OF FRIENDS.

SAVED from the perils of storm and sea,
Aged by sorrow as well as years,
A weary man, in captivity,
Along the Appian Way appears,
His firm face set toward wished-for Rome,
And a heart that feels he is nearing home.

He was the actor in many a scene,
A cheery friend in the raging wind,
A helper, wherever his lot had been,
A brother, a teacher, strong and kind :
Now he is lonely, faint, and tired,
Still far from the place he has long desired.

But he looks at the crowds as he passes on,
And fain would tell them the glad, good news,
That life eternal by Christ is won,
And the strangers, Gentiles, Greeks, and Jews,
Coming to Him shall be glad and free ;
But now the prisoner must silent be.

But in the road, with astonished joy,
He sees the face of a long-known friend ;
Then others come, and the time employ
In happy talk as their way they wend ;
And again fresh comers swell the band,
And the journey lies through a pleasant land.

Thank God, that our travels are ne'er so long,
But friends can meet us within the way,
And cheer our hearts with strengthening song,
And add some light to the darkest day ;
We, too, take courage ; and soon shall come
With the friends all near in the heavenly home.

THE FINISHED LIFE.

(2 TIM. iv. 7.)

AN old man bent o'er the parchment scroll,
And his eyes were dim with tears,
He was left alone in his prison-cell
After the work of years.
The friends he loved, grown faint with fear,
Dared not to stand beside
The man who had suffered and wrought for them
As their teacher and their guide.

Alone? Not so. There was One who came,
And whose presence, calm and bright,
Gave him courage and hopefulness
In the hours of the darkest night ;
He would not leave him, would not forsake,
But would give the conqueror's crown
To the aged man, who was brave and strong,
And had won for Him renown.

So Paul the aged, whose work was done,
Rested with pen in hand,
And thought of those who were safely home
In the Father's promised land.

Then, looking back on his own past life,
Triumphantly wrote the words
That have sounded since in the Church of Christ
Like sweet inspiring chords.

“ I have fought the fight, though the foe was fierce,
I have beaten him day by day ;
My work has lain where the noise was loud,
My place in the thickest fray ;
I have not quailed by the Captain's side,
And this was my battle cry—
' For the King, the Mighty, the Crucified,
Honour and victory.' ”

“ I have finished my course, though the race was long,
For I kept my eager eyes
Not on the racers who ran by me,
But fixed on the promised prize ;
And now it is sure, and the righteous Judge
Will give it me by-and-by.
I am growing weary and spent at last,
But the goal is very nigh. ”

“ I have kept the faith. 'Twas a sacred trust
And I hid it within my heart ;
No foe could wrest it away from me,
'Twas mine, ' the better part.' ”
Henceforth there's a crown awaiting me,
To cast at the Master's feet
With those who were found in the testing day,
For His blessed service meet.”

The letter was finished, the work was done,
The pen was laid aside ;
Does it matter how soon the last hour came,
Or how the servant died ?

We know he rests from his labours now
At the Saviour's throne in heaven,
And we pray, God grant that to each of us
The spirit of Paul be given.

RESTING.

'Tis like repose 'neath Elim's palm,
Or the soft notes of praiseful psalm,
Or the hushed breath of summer's calm,
This time of rest.

God speaks, and like a little child
Grown timid journeying through the wild,
The troubled heart is still and mild
Upon His breast.

The feet were weary of the hill,
The hands had wrought, and were not still,
The busy brain performed its will
Through all the day.

And then the Father hid the light,
And drew the curtains of the night,
And tasks unfinished out of sight
Were laid away.

And now His blessèd gifts abound,
His care and love the life surround,
He gives the tired ones sleep profound,
And rest is sweet.

He makes the waking full of peace,
Bidding all strife and pain to cease,
And joy's true blessedness increase
Beside His feet.

And thankful thoughts the memory throng,
While the glad spirit wakes to song,
That times of sorrow are not long
Till peace be given :

And this repose by Elim's palm,
This praiseful echo of glad psalm,
Are but as earnest of the calm
And rest of heaven.

THE NAME.

"Sweetest note in seraph song,
Sweetest name on mortal tongue,
Sweetest carol ever sung—
Jesus, blessed Jesus."

EVERMORE His name is spoken in a love-tone true and strong;
'Tis the name that lends a richness to the mother's cradle-song,
'Tis the name that little children utter when they kneel to pray,
For His blessing in the morning or the closing of the day,
'Tis the name the dying falter with the last low, sobbing breath,
And the first word of the anthem raised in heaven after death.

Strangely sweet the name of Jesus! We have loved it all the
years,
And it thrills so through our spirits that we whisper it with
tears;

It has turned to gladdest music all the discords of our life,
It has sounded o'er the ocean hushing all its passion's strife,
It has brought a gleam of sunshine to the very darkest days,
And we sing the name of Jesus in all joyful songs of praise.

Who will join us in our singing? Are there strangers to His love
Who are silent while His praises cleave the air and mount above?
Would they come and see the Saviour they would learn the holy
psalm,
And their lives would be like music, sweet and happy, grand and
calm,
And He waits with words of welcome, ever saying, "Come and see,
Would you be the meek and lowly, come, My children, learn
of Me."

There are safety and forgiveness and great blessings at His feet.
He will lift the heavy burdens, make the joy of life complete,
And the future shall have nothing that shall cause the bliss to end
Of the heart that trusts in Jesus as his Master and his Friend.
So we pray, oh, tender Saviour, take us up into Thy love,
And abide with us for ever till we dwell with Thee above.

THROUGH A THUNDER-STORM.

It seemed that the earth was weary or faint with excess of heat,
And heavy and slow were the footsteps that passed through the
burning street ;
The birds were too tired for singing, a languor was on the trees,
And the waves of the sea seemed dying for a breath of the
stirring breeze.

Then a sound as of distant cannon rolled up through the sultry eve,
And we saw how the fiery lightning the sky and the sea could cleave ;
The wind like a loosened spirit caught the dust in a whirling cloud,
Then tore through the trees in madness, and suddenly shrieked
aloud.

There followed a hush as solemn as the silence that waits for death,
And we listened in awed excitement, when, quick as a hasty breath,
The storm-power rushing upon us, dazzled our eyes with light,
Then plunged us deep in the darkness of terrible starless night.

It seemed that all fierce wild spirits were keeping a festival,
For the lightning, flashing from heaven with scarcely an interval,
Sent the thunder rolling about us like an awful artillery,
Till the earth was shaking for terror, and a trembling was on the
sea.

But we thought of an old, old story that came like a soothing psalm,
Of One who rebuked the tempest, making the storm a calm ;
And we said, " He is walking towards us over the troubled sea,
And why are we then so fearful since safe in His care we be ? "

So we listened in hope for a whisper, " It is I, be ye not afraid,"
For we know how His voice can quiet the heart that is sore
dismayed ;
If He would rebuke the tempest, how soon it would sink to rest,
And the spirit would sleep in quiet as a child on its mother's breast.

Then the Master came in the darkness, making the storm to cease,
He hushed the voice of the thunder, and the lightnings died in
peace ;
And we thanked the King when the waters grew calm in the
smiling bay,
For the skies in the east were glowing with the dawn of a
Sabbath-day.

A DOOR OF HOPE.

(HOSEA ii. 14.)

A VOICE has called me to the wilderness
For quiet rest,
Far from the place which rapid footsteps press
In eager quest ;
And here I lie and wait from morn to night
Till there shall be
Some marching order sent in words of light
To set me free.

But while I wait within this Achor-vale,
I look away
To where the sunny joys of life prevail,
And hear One say,
"After the quiet and the rest of life
Thou shalt be strong ;
And when has died away the noise of strife
Thou shalt have song."

And then I see, as through an open door,
A joyous scene ;
The busy toilers working as before
Where I have been ;
Glad smiles are on their lips, and in their eyes
The mystic light
Of those who see a home beyond the skies,
And love the right.

And a good hope arises in my heart :
I shall be soon
Working among the workers at my part
Through all the noon ;

Busy with pleasant labour, and content
To toil and sing,
So that the years remaining shall be spent
For Christ the King.

And He shall teach me in these quiet days
Of peace and rest,
The old, forgotten songs of joyous praise
Which I loved best ;
And so that He be with me while I stay,
And make me glad,
There is no hour of all the passing day
That can be sad.

And yet, another scene before my sight
Passes sometimes,
And I can see a world of wondrous light,
And hear the chimes
Of that sweet Sabbath-land where tired hearts rest,
And work is done,
And God has made the warriors greatly blessed
For victories won.

And so I thank the Father-voice that bade
Me rest awhile,
Where visions of the future make me glad ;
And in His smile
The quiet days shall pass, till once again
It is His will
That I should leave the vale of night and pain,
And serve Him still.

SUMMER EVENING.

Now from the westward the opals ascending,
 Make for the sun his night chariot of fire,
Now the deep crimsons with purples are blending,
 To robe the faint day in last gorgeous attire.

All things seem sorry because she is dying,
 Some flowers cannot watch her, they close up their eyes ;
The earth puts on mourning, the dark trees are sighing.
 Unheeding, uncaring, the day slowly dies.

A few faithful birds sing her requiem half sadly,
 Some flowers send their perfume to her through the air,
And the fair day is dead ! And the weary earth gladly
 Now welcomes the darkness for rest and for prayer.

Thick mists throw a pall o'er the once purple mountains,
 The green hills are lost in the shrouding black glooms,
Weird night songs are sung by the springs and the fountains,
 And the shrubs and the trees are like desolate tombs.

Then to lighten the darkness the soft stars are shining,
 Like cheery friends saying, " Hope on for awhile,
Nor weep and lament for the fair day's declining,
 Another shall gladden your heart with her smile."

Then the children remember the love of their Father,
 And creep the more closely to Him in the night ;
He will not forsake in their need, but will rather
 Abide and watch by them till dawn of the light.

He pardons their sins, and He pities their sorrows,
 He hushes the tumult of fear in each breast,
 He gives them the promise of happy to-morrows,
 And gladly they come to His arms for their rest.

NEVER FORSAKEN.

“ I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.”

THIS is Thy word to Thy hosts, mighty Leader,
 And forward they march, for it renders them strong ;
 Small fear have they for the fate of the battle,
 Glad-hearted sing they their jubilant song.
 Not so courageous, yet hopeful and patient,
 I, too, would sing as my battles I fight,
 “ Whate’er shall o’ertake me,
 Oh ! do not forsake me,”
 And I shall grow brave for my God and the right.

When, in the dawn of the bountiful morning,
 A new day stands waiting—Thy gift unto me,
 And crowds of fresh duties attend my awaking,
 My heart shall still sing this old song unto Thee :—
 “ In labour or pleasure, abide with me ever,”
 And flowers shall grow even in dark, barren ways ;
 Thy servant but make me,
 And do not forsake me,
 And joy like spring sunshine shall lighten my days.

When I climb up the sides of the steep, rugged mountain,
 And the marches are long, and the rests far apart,
 When “ the burden and heat of the day ” are upon me,
 Thy promise shall solace and strengthen my heart.

And still I will pray through life's lingering noontide,
Oh ! hear me, good Master : give strength from above ;
Oh ! do not forsake me,
Nor harm shall o'ertake me,
Encircled and safe in the arms of Thy love.

When the shadows of life shall grow broader and deeper,
And night comes apace with its silence and sleep,
And all the familiar, sweet things of the lifetime
Fade off, and yet leave me too weary to sleep,
Oh ! then, in the darkness, come nearer, be dearer,
And still in Thy mercy but whisper "Forgiven ;"
And do not forsake me,
But graciously take me,
To dwell at Thy side, and to praise Thee in heaven.

And thus do Thy children entreat Thee, Redeemer ;
Not " Give me no cross that is heavy to bear,"
Not " Lead me for ever through ways that are sunny,"
Nor " Give to me riches and honour to share ;"
They ask what is greater than pleasure or glory,
The joy of Thy presence wherever they roam ;
Nor wilt Thou forsake them
But evermore take them,
Through paths that shall bring them at last to Thy home.

EARLY SUNSETS.

'Tis not now the lingering day
Of the laughing, happy May,
Or the long midsummer fairness that will scarcely own a night !
But the darkness falls betimes,
And we hear the evening chimes
Through the thickening mists and shadows that are chasing the
faint light.

Yet the crimsons in the West,
That proclaim the early rest,
Are all glowing with the brightness of a sunny summer day ;
And the fair flowers in their beds
Are still lifting up their heads,
When the gloaming, swiftly coming, hides their loveliness away.

Do we long for one hour more
Of the sunshine on the shore,
Or the blending of the opals with the mountains' purple glooms?
All our wishes are in vain ;
Night, the sexton, comes again,
And the spreading sea and meadows are all buried in his tombs.

But the shortening autumn days,
That are musical with praise,
For the golden wealth of harvest gained from orchards and from
fields,
May be tranquil if not bright,
In the slowly-fading light,
And may bring a deeper pleasure than the merry spring-time yields.

For the early setting sun
Sees the tasks of men well done,
And reward of summer labour that has been performed with zest ;
And if only work be finished
When the work hours are diminished,
Who complains that early darkness brings a longer time for rest ?

May it be so with us all,
When the last night-shadows fall,
That the harvest has been gathered, and the Master's smile
well won !
Then, amidst the evening's calm,
We will sing our closing psalm—
Unto God be praises given for His rest at set of sun.

A SONG OF THE WAY.

"The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places."

THE way lay through valleys where meadows were bright,
The streamlet made music through all the glad day,
The eventide faded away into night,
Which curtained the flowers and so hid them away ;
And the journey went on where the golden stars shone ;
And the pilgrims had always the Father's care known.

The season was changed, and the skies were o'ercast,
The wild breezes whistled among the bare trees,
The flowers drooped their heads, for the summer was past,
And a dark pall hung thickly above the grey seas ;
But the way that led on by the desolate shore
Was brightened by infinite love evermore.

The winter came on in its folds of white snow,
And the pilgrims still gladly the journey pursued,
For they heard, "I am with you wherever you go,"
And they knew that the Father would bless them with good ;
So they sang as they travelled, and e'en in the night,
His presence was with them, and they walked in the light.

The hill sides were steep as the climbers went on
With patient, slow steps up the difficult way,
And they sighed for companionships over and gone,
And they felt they were poorer for many a day ;
But one Friend abode through the hours bright or dim,
And the way must be good that they traverse with Him.

So cheerily sing they this song of the way :
Come, brothers and sisters, we near our sweet home ;
If the path should be thorny, we have not to stay,
And the Guide is beside us wherever we roam.
Let us gladly go forward, Christ stands at the door,
We shall enter our rest, and be pilgrims no more.

THE FISHERMAN'S SUNDAY.

"LAST night when the moon was shining, I came o'er the freckled
sea,
For the hours of my rest were coming, and my children were
calling me ;
They had mounted the sloping sandhills, and looked where the
vessels came,
And Willie, the youngest, shouted, and hoped I should hear my
name.

"Do you know how I love the water? A landsman I could
not be !
I should spend my strength in repining away from the wooing sea ;
But I'm glad of the calm home Sunday, that comes to me now and
then,
When I listen to other voices than those of the rough sea-men.

"So I said to my mate, ' Let us hasten,' all night we had toiled in
vain,
But we always rest on the Sabbath, nor care for a passing gain ;
For a man who has little children, who live in this world of woe,
Must give them a part of Sunday, to teach what they ought to
know.

"So home we came through the water ; the children were long in
bed,
But up from the snug, warm pillow rose many a curly head ;
And they uttered their sleepy greetings, then back to the land of
dreams
They went, till the sun in the morning touched them with gentle
beams.

"I took a walk in the garden, the little ones after me,
And away o'er the sloping sandhills were the waves of the flashing
sea ;
And I told of the heavenly Father, whose hand had kept back
the storm,
And brought me again among them, to my home with its comforts
warm.

"And Harry, the oldest, muttered, 'I will love Him through all
my days,
And I will try not to grieve Him, nor wander in wicked ways.'
And Charlie looked up to heaven, 'I will sing Him my songs,'
said he,
'And I shall be soon a sailor, and go on the sunny sea.'

"They went with me to the chapel, and they looked so good and
still,
That I inwardly prayed the Father to teach them at once His
will ;
And my heart grew strong and tender, for the preacher, it seemed
to me,
Had a special message this morning for all who work on the sea.

"I was ready with simple lessons for my class in the afternoon,
For I am the infant teacher ; and many a cheery tune
Did the children sing together of jewels and 'sowing seed,'
And the tender, pitiful Saviour, whose love we always need.

and then in my whitewashed cottage the mother was making
 tea,
 and pleasant the fisherman finds it after his work at sea
 have wife and children about him, and hear the news of the
 week
 it comes to the children's bed-time, and a blessing at last we
 seek.

he wife and I are together at the service at eventide,
 and we feel that even the waters cannot kind hearts divide ;
 hear of our home in heaven, where together we soon shall be,
 of the reach of the sighings of the desolate, dreary sea.

At last, when the day is over, I rest with a thankful heart,
 now that my lot is lonely, but I'll bravely do my part ;
 and will take care of my children, and He will be good to me,
 I trust Him to-day and ever, who is with me, even at sea."

•

"HE CARETH FOR YOU."

LORD, Thy servants long ago,
 In the midst of pain and woe,
 Had the wondrous joy to know
 Thou caredst for them.

And Thy servants of to-day,
 Passing through a troubled way,
 Often lift their hearts to pray,
 "Lord, care for me."

Each one for himself, appears
Kneeling at Thy throne in tears,
Crying, burdened with life's fears,
"Lord, care for me."

When the way is dark as night,
And I cry in vain for light,
Let Thy voice my heart delight,
Oh, care for me.

When the world with voices sweet
Would allure me from Thy feet,
Come Thou near my soul to greet ;
Oh, care for me.

Pity me in my distress,
Comfort me in loneliness,
God of love Thy servant bless
And care for me.

And at last when life shall be
As an ended day for me,
Give me then Thy face to see,
Who cares for me.

BY THE SEA-SIDE.

FAR from heat of town and city,
And the toil that moves to pity,
Crowds of thankful hearts are basking in the sunny light to-day ;
Scarce a cave, sea-washed and shady,
But is sheltering some lady,
Or a beach but has its myriads of glad children at their play.

All around the wave-washed island,
Weary people from the high-land
Sit and lie on sand or shingle, and enjoy their well-earned rest ;
And the water, as it dashes
On the rocks, and gently splashes
World-worn faces, gives them courage to go back and work with
zest.

Very pleasing is the motion
Of the great, unrestful ocean,
And the eyes grow bright that watch it in its moods of play or strife ;
For it gives to minds reflecting
Themes for useful thought, suggesting
Hope and comfort for the sailors on the changeful sea of life.

The dark rocks are unresponding
To the white waves' playful fondling—
Frowning back at their advances sullen and unmoved they stand ;
Yet a thought they bring to cheer us,
Of His love who bendeth near us,
And is like the great rock's shadow in a hot and weary land.

In the cool and pleasant dawning
Of the matchless August morning,
We can almost see Him walking on the smooth waves of the sea ;
And at even, in the gloaming,
We can hear, amid the foaming,
The same voice that stilled the tumult on the Lake of Galilee.

And we thank the Lord who loves us,
For the blue sky spread above us,
For the bracing air of mountains, and the breezes on the shore :
For the rest and the refreshing,
And, beyond all else, His blessing,
While we pray that in the future we may serve and love Him more.

A HARVEST SONG.

MEN say that the world in its years has grown olden,
But glad eyes look out upon colours all golden,
And the earth is yet strong in its prime.
It has borne us rich fruit which is gathered to-day,
It has scattered the corn in the labourer's way,
And joy-attuned voices most thankfully say,
Harvest home ! harvest home !
The good harvest has come.

Oh, many a day in the cold wintry weather,
Hosts of heads were bowed down and leal hearts prayed
together,
"Oh, give daily bread in Thy time."
And the corn was wrapped warmly in blankets of snow,
And the touch of the sun made it eager to grow,
And now all the world is enraptured to know,
That the harvest is here
Though the winter is near.

There's a song breaking forth that the singer's heart pleases,
A song that is heard in the autumn's soft breezes,
A hymn of thanksgiving and love.
For God has remembered His children again,
And, sending the sunshine, the wind, and the rain,
Has covered the acres and ripened the grain ;
And men shall have food,
For the harvest is good.

Sing out the glad notes till the songs reach to heaven ;
All praise to our Father, once more He has given
The bountiful proofs of His care.

The wealth is heaped up on the granary floor,
For He loves in profusion His blessings to pour,
And surely His children will doubt Him no more
Now the harvest has come.
Harvest home ! harvest home !

But a voice from the corn-fields is solemnly preaching,
To far-away hearts the grave signal is reaching,
Be ready, *thy* harvest is near.
Death comes with his sickle, and soon it shall be
That laid low by his touch thou shalt die to be free,
Since heaven is the garner made ready for thee.
Harvest home ! harvest home !
For the autumn has come.

Grow on, but be ready. The sunset's bright glory
Is bringing the end of thy life's little story,
And thou may'st be gathered ere night.
Be glad for thy growing, and willing to die ;
There is life for thee yet far beyond the blue sky,
And the Planter shall cause thee to blossom on high.
Let the earth-harvest come,
And sing thou Harvest home !

THE INGATHERING.

ON the sun-lighted hills,
By the musical rills,
There is treasure of golden grain ;
And aye where the trees wave their boughs in the breeze,
Or the broad spaces lie with their breasts to the sky,
The sickle is busy again.

SONGS OF SUNSHINE.

In the early morn
To the standing corn
The reapers come with zest,
And they labour well with strokes that tell,
Till the ears lie low on the sods below,
And the even shall bring them rest.

All the bright warm day
Do they cleave their way,
And they work to a merry tune,
For the plants are bread, and crowds shall be fed,
Since our Father has answered the prayer they said,
And the winter shall come full soon.

In the busy street
Where the people meet,
They talk of the golden grain ;
And they pray together for sunny weather,
The best to win as they gather in
The harvest wealth again.

For God is good,
And He sends the food
Which His children daily need ;
And the harvest song as it floats along
Is full of praise for the sunny days,
That God doth the prayer-cry heed.

We see again
That our fears are vain,
And He will our good increase ;
We are happy once more, and we gladly store
The gifts of His hand that are decking the land
In this time of light and peace.

What shall we render
For love so tender
And care that is never tired ?
What musical lays, what gifts of praise,
Can we bring to our Friend whose love has no end,
And who gives what our hearts desired ?

Alas ! to the King
No gems can we bring,
No silver or gold is ours ;
But we love Him more for our autumn store,
And will not forget that He loves us yet,
While we serve Him with all our powers.

"FRIEND AFTER FRIEND DEPARTS."

YET another has gone homeward !
There were ties to keep him here ;
With our love we would have held him,
But the Master was so dear
That he could but heed His whisper
As it thrilled him in the night,
Calling on to higher service
In the land of perfect light.

Oh, the earth is poor and empty,
None can fill his vacant place ;
But we think of all his rapture
When he saw the Saviour's face.
Could he stay for eyes beseeching ?
Could he heed the hindering hands ?
Jesus called, and now the servant
By the royal Master stands.

We have lost a standard-bearer
Who was foremost in the fight,
True and tender, brave, courageous,
With a heart that loved the right ;
But, while we are weeping for him,
He the crown of life has won,
He is resting by the river,
And has heard the words, " Well done.

Little children knew and loved him,
And they listened to his word
While he told the old, old story
Of the dying, living Lord ;
And sad hearts that grief had broken,
Learnt the sweetness and the rest
Of the soul that trusts in Jesus,
And is pillowed on His breast.

We must miss him, the departed,
Sending longing thoughts to him,
For he leaves the once glad-hearted
To a world all spoiled and dim ;
But we know that e'en his dearest
Must be glad that he is crowned,
As he stands among the angels
Who the throne of God surround.

And the heaven that is so wealthy
With our dear ones gone before,
Shall be nearer and yet dearer
To our hearts for evermore ;
Till we hear the Father's summons
To come higher, and we go,
Where all life is love and rapture,
Where is no more death or woe

NINEVEH.

A STERN man walks round the city walls,
 His face is sad and his voice is strong ;
 And, slowly walking, aloud he calls
 That which shall silence the mirthful song :
 " In forty days will the Lord destroy
 The city, and quench the people's joy."

The old men heard it. " And can it be ? "
 They asked each other with anxious face ;
 " Must our joyous city, so bright and free,
 Be overthrown and bereft of grace ?
 Shall our weary eyes at the last behold
 The grief which the stranger has thus foretold ? "

The children heard it, and stopped their play ;
 Was it true what the awful prophet said ?
 Must life be changed from a holiday
 And become a sorrowful thing instead ?
 And the children wept when the tidings came,
 For they would suffer who had no blame.

And the men in the midst of the work and care
 Of the busy city were stricken sore ;
 For they heard the mourning in the air,
 And they sighed that their pleasure would soon be o'er.
 They had offended the Mighty God,
 Would He chasten them now with His mighty rod ?

The king in the palace with heart of stone
 Called to his people : " If we repent,
 Perchance we may not be overthrown,
 And God may not send us the punishment.
 Let us cry with tears for our nation's sin,
 And who knows but His mercy we shall win ? "

The mighty Father looked down and smiled,
Mercy was ready, He pardoned all.
Was not each sinner His well-loved child?
Must He not listen to every call?
So the sun shone out where the clouds had been,
And the heart of the Highest once more was seen.

IN REMEMBRANCE.

"This do in remembrance of Me."

"OH, how could we e'er forget Him?" we said in the long ago;
But we knew not ourselves and others, as since we have learned to
know;
We never could be like Peter, we never could faithless prove,
So we thought in the joy and freshness that came with the dawn of
love;
But now we must hide our faces, and sorrow for very shame
Of the change that has made us colder since the day when we knew
His name.

Oh, green were the pleasant pastures, and rapid the light young feet,
And the songs of the happy pilgrims were tender, and glad, and
sweet,
And we clung to the mighty Master, and never would let Him go,
And we feel that He stayeth with us in the seasons of pain and woe.
But how can we still the longing for the days that we knew of old?
And what can we do who are feeling the love of our hearts grow
cold?

But a message is coming to us, like the words of a long-loved
psalm,
And over our restless spirits there stealeth a heavenly calm;

the Master invites us nearer, and asks if we love Him still,
 I you know how the Saviour's whisper the hearts of His friends
 can thrill ;
 I we find we have not forgotten the Lord who will not forget,
 we bend in our joy before Him, and feel that we love Him yet.

gather about His table—will He look as in days of yore?
 nothing has ever changed Him, the Lord who our sorrows bore.
 I if only we have the courage to gaze in His shining face,
 shall read for ourselves His message of pardon, and love, and
 grace ;
 I He says, as He comes to meet us, with the tender, familiar
 smile,
 come nearer to Me, remember My love for a little while."

Master, Thy love is mighty, and how can we keep away?
 need Thee as much as ever in the dark or sunny day.
 have listened to many voices, but none is so dear as Thine,
 have looked in the face of others, and longed for our Friend
 Divine ;
 w keep us for ever with Thee, until, in Thy home above,
 drink the new wine of the kingdom, and render Thee love for
 love.

•REBEKAH.

SHE stood a moment in the soft fair light
 That threw its glory o'er the dying day,
 And looked upon the world that lay so still
 Before her father's tent. The work well done,
 There now remained to her such pleasant tasks
 As fetching the cool water from the well,
 And meeting young companions in the way,
 And dreaming dreams before the night-sleep came,

And thinking of her future. To her feet
The golden sunset crept, then kissed her lips,
And met the softer light of her dark eyes,
But told her nothing of the anxious heart
Of Isaac's servant waiting in the shades
The answer to his prayer. It drew her forth,
A pleasant picture, in the afternoon
Of that eventful day : a girl whose life
Had been all joy, whose bounding pulses thrilled
With strong delight in all glad, lovely things ;
Who knew the flowers, the birds, the sloping hills,
And moved about her home as one who held
Its music in her hands. And yet she knew
The wonder and the hope that women have
In twilight musings. " Was there in the world
Some heart that needed her to steal its pain ?
Some weary feet for whom her own could walk ?
Some eyes that asked the love that she could give ?
Was she not young and vigorous ? Had she not
Hands swift and gentle that could minister ?
Some day perhaps it might be hers to pour
Her heart's wealth forth, and tend the best beloved,
And draw the aching head down to her breast,
And kiss the tears away from sorrow's eyes,
And take her woman's place as comforter,
With none to blame ! "

Her smile was brighter still,
Pleased with this thought ; and with a free, light step,
She passed from out the tent, and to the well,
Her pitcher on her shoulder.

A tired man
Dusty from travelling was waiting there
With wistful, searching looks, and by his side
The weary camels knelt. The girl's dark eyes
Encountered his, and when the vessel came
Forth from the fountain filled with cooling drops,

The man pressed forward. "Let me sip," he said,
 "A little water from thy pitcher." She,
 With prompt and kindly grace, held to his lips
 The cooling beverage. "Drink, my lord," she said,
 "And I will draw the water from the well
 Until the thirsty camels also drink,
 And have enough."

It was the sign he asked !
 And Isaac's servant lifted up his heart
 In thankful prayer to God. She led the way
 Unto her father's house ; he followed on,
 And told his story, spreading forth his gifts.
 "Lo, I am Abraham's servant, and my lord
 Hath sent me to his kindred that his son
 May marry not a Canaanitish bride,
 But take a wife who fears his father's God.
 I journeyed hither, and I prayed that she
 Whom God should choose might meet me at the well,
 And give to me and to my camels drink.
 And thus thy daughter did." "It is of God,"
 Said Laban and Bethuel.

The next day
 They started on the journey ; and the girl,
 With earnest, steadfast heart, and lighted eyes,
 Looked on before her. What she wished had come !
 The woman's dower of helpfulness and love
 Was not denied her. Isaac in the fields
 Musing at even welcomed the fair bride,
 And she became his comfort and his love.

* * * * *

An aged woman, crafty, passionate,
 And partial, loving but one son alone,
 Stood by the couch whereon her husband lay
 In his last hours. The shadows of the grave
 Were in his worn-out eyes ; he could not see
 The faces of his sons ; but called them near

That he might breathe his blessing ere he died.
"Esau, beloved!" But the mother's fraud
Brought Jacob in his elder brother's stead
That he might steal away the solemn words.
And when his heart misgave him, "Upon me
Shall be thy curse, my son," Rebekah said,
And Isaac was deceived!

Oh, bright-eyed girls!
Be faithful to the promise of your youth,
Let not time rob you of such precious things
As truth and loyalty. Be strong and good,
That life's fair morning may not end in tears,
But in the joy of right and peace of God.

ELISHA'S DEATH.

How did he die? Nay, the Book says not—
There's a word, and then silence deep;
We know not the changes that paled his face
Ere he thankfully fell asleep;
We know not if weakness had laid him low,
Or his brow grew white with pain;
No death-bed scene is before our eyes,
No record of words remain.

How did he die? Did he pass away
As his master had done before?
Was he borne by horses of blazing fire
Up to the open door?
Did he die in silence and loneliness?
Or with sad friends looking on?
Did quivering lips give the parting kiss,
And mourners say, "He's gone"?

We do not know. We can only tell
That soon as he passed away,
He saw Elijah with welcome smile,
In the dawn of his endless day.
He heard the chorus of holy praise,
And his heart grew strangely glad,
As he saw the hosts of the blessed ones
In heavenly radiance clad.

We know that he knelt in his rapturous joy
At the great All-Father's feet ;
That he thankfully saw as he glanced around
That life's journey was all complete.
The sorrow and hunger were over now,
The toil and the weary woe,
And the smile of God was his great reward,
As it was in the world below.

How did he die ? Nay, it matters not :
How did he live ? we ask.
Did he faithfully follow the Highest's word,
Fulfilling the daily task ?
He did ; and at last when the shadows fell,
We know that his crown was won ;
And he heard, 'mid the music the angels made,
His whisper of love, " Well done."

So we learn a lesson of trust to-day,
Whenever the end shall be ;
And the God of mercy shall send us word
That henceforth we, too, are free.
It will not matter what way we die,
Nor aught of the time or place ;
Let us but live for our Master here,
And then we shall see His face.

CONQUERORS.

"More than conquerors through Him that loved us."

Two names are added to our list of dead !
Two honoured names ! We speak them with a sigh,
For earth is poorer when its good men die,
And days are darker for bright spirits fled.

They were two soldiers, valiant in the fight ;
Brave men and true, who led the armies on
Through many a contest, to a victory won
By stout, strong hearts, for God, and for the right.

One from the western city passed away ;
His work about him, and his eager thought,
Fixed on some hallowed service to be wrought,
When death's swift night brought everlasting day.

The other, resting by the southern sea,
After the din of the great busy world,
Where he the good King's banner had unfurled,
Passed gently upward with his Lord to be.

Two loyal men they were, who lived in light,
And said strong words, and crowned them with good deeds,
And yet were ready for the people's needs,
And ministry of souls that dwell in night.

And every triumph made them but more brave
To bear "the burden and the heat of day,"
And, "faint, but still pursuing," keep the way,
And bring weak hearts to Christ, the "Strong to save."

Then, after years of firm fidelity,
And grand successes in the holy strife,
Was it not well to pass away to life
Where death is lost in immortality?

And now they rest. But in the songs they sing
They claim no guerdon, and no victor's crown,
For all the joy of triumph and renown
They lay before the feet of Christ the King.

If they were conquerors in life's short days,
It was because He loved them evermore;
And now the warfare and the work are o'er,
Oh, glad indeed are they to give Him praise!

A SONG OF HOPE.

“O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in Me is thine help.”

BITTER things had the prophet said,
While the people listened with low-bowed head.
The Father was angry, had suffered long,
With patient sorrow, His children's wrong.
But now should the day of His grace be o'er?
Would He say He would comfort them nevermore?

Oh, no! for His love cannot pass away.
How can He leave them? He needs must stay;
His heart yearns over them even yet;
Can a mother her child forget?
His arms are ready to shelter still
Those whom He loves from every ill.

With tender voice He calls them home,
"Thou hast destroyed thyself, yet come,
In Me is thine help." He will go to meet
The weary ones coming with blistered feet ;
He knows how dreary their wandering be,
So He summons them, "Come and rest with Me."

Then the worthless idols cast away,
The Father shall welcome His own to-day ;
They are hastening near from the wilderness,
And His hands are ready to help and bless.
Nevermore will the children roam,
In the Father's heart they have found a home.

O God of Mercy, let all men hear
Thy words of welcome, and hasten near.
We, too, are sinful, and weak, and frail,
Let not the world and sin prevail.
We have destroyed ourselves. In Thee,
Now and for ever, our help shall be.

AT JESUS' FEET.

So glad she was to listen to the Lord,
She could not move lest she should lose a word ;
Her eager eyes were fixed upon His face,
Her heart was glad in this her time of grace.

There might be active service to be done ;
But words of His were jewels to be won,
And so she sat entranced beside His feet,
And knew the voice of Jesus to be sweet.

Deep in her heart she treasured them away,
To keep and look at in the stormy day,
When Jesus should be far from Bethany,
And she might miss His words of sympathy.

But suddenly a fretful voice was heard,
A weak but loving heart, to anger stirred,
Spoke through it ; and the world-worn woman spent
Before the Lord her sighs of discontent.

“Dost Thou not care that Mary leaveth me
To serve alone, while she is glad with Thee ?
Bid her to help me.” Then the Master turned
And looked on Martha’s face, where anger burned.

“Oh, Martha, Martha, careful, troubled one,
Seeing so many duties to be done,
One thing alone is needful. The good part
Mary hath chosen, and it fills her heart.”

So spoke the Saviour ; and to-day we need
The lesson ; for if we would serve indeed,
We must have times of rest with Him our Lord—
Must sit at Jesus’ feet and hear His Word.

GIVE US THY PEACE.

O CHRIST, our Saviour, by whose will
The raging waves grew calm and still,
In us Thy gracious words fulfil,
Give us Thy peace.

The world has given us many things,
The pain that hurts, the sin that stings,
The transient pleasure that has wings—
Give us Thy peace.

Each morning when the rising sun
Shows many a triumph to be won
And common duties to be done,
Give us Thy peace.

Each evening when the hours complete
Our tale of weakness and defeat,
And we lie weeping at Thy feet,
Give us Thy peace.

And when through all the busy day
We try to serve Thee as we may,
And pass along the lighted way,
Give us Thy peace.

And in the silence of the night
Keep us from anguish and from fright,
And be to us our life and sight,
Give us Thy peace.

Until we reach the tranquil shore,
When all the storms of earth are o'er,
And we are with Thee evermore,
Give us Thy peace.

THE WITHERED HAND.

IT was the Sabbath day. On the blue lake
The little ships were waiting, and the men
Rested from all their labours. The glad flowers
Seemed to be sweeter when that morning broke,
And happy birds poured forth their psalms of praise
As if in this fair world of sun and flowers
Could be no sorrow. Yet my heart was sad
With an old pain of disappointed hope,
For I was no strong man with powerful hands
To battle with the world. I could not dig,
I could not take the lambs into my arms
And carry them. I could not sow the corn
Nor reap the harvest. In the vintage time,
When merry voices rang among the vines,
And active hands were busy with the grapes,
I used to keep at home. None wanted me ;
For in this world where there is much to do,
Only the useful and the diligent
Are needed by their fellows. On the sea
I used to sail sometimes with cheery friends,
But when the winds rushed down the mountain sides,
And lashed the waves and made them leap on high,
And when the ship required the firm, strong grasp
Of manly hands to keep it from the rocks,
I used to wish myself on shore again.
My hand was withered ; it had lost its strength ;
I could not pluck the pretty painted flowers,
The sight of which brought tears into my eyes,
Nor bear my little children in my arms,
Nor live at all the free, strong, useful life
Of those who had good servants in their hands.

I thought of this upon the Sabbath day,
And blessed my God that in His synagogue
The withered and the halt would welcome be,
And I could pray to Him and sing the Psalms
As freely as my neighbours. So I went
With thankful heart, and listed to the law,
And dared to let my thoughts go up to God
And crave His mercy.

Jesus came that day,
As was His wont, and taught the worshippers,
Speaking such words as touched the hardest hearts,
And made the thoughtless think upon their God.
I had oft heard of Him. Men spoke of Him
From morn till even, not tiring of the theme,
But I had never seen the Lord before ;
And as I sought His face, and saw His eyes
Resting on me, a strange hope filled my soul,
And I almost exclaimed, "Believe in Him,
He is the Son of God." But then I saw
That scribes and Pharisees were watching Him
With angry eyes. They said He did not keep
The Sabbath holy, and they looked at me,
And hoped they might accuse Him.

Jesus said,
"Rise up, and stand forth in the midst," to me,
And I obeyed Him gladly. All could see,
And all could hear the Master. "If a man
Should have a sheep fall into any pit
Upon the Sabbath-day, will not the man
Lay hold on it and lift it out?" He said,
"Is it not lawful thus to save a life,
And to do good upon the Sabbath-day?"
But none would answer Him. The Lord was grieved
Because their hearts were hard. He looked on them
With grave, stern eyes ; then kindly smiled on me,
And said, in gentle tones, "Stretch forth thy hand."

And then—how can I tell you of my joy?
 I had not moved my hand for many years :
 It dropped against my side, a lifeless thing ;
 But when He said to me, "Stretch forth thy hand,"
 I knew that He would give strength to obey ;
 And eagerly, in strong, unfaltering faith,
 I lifted up my hand—and it was whole !

Oh ! are you maimed and strengthless, sick and sad ?
 I tell you of this Saviour. Close your ears
 To the coarse words of unbelieving men,
 And listen only for the Master's voice !
 Have faith in Him. Believe His lightest word ;
 Whate'er He tells you, do it. He will be
 Your Healer, Saviour, and eternal Joy ;
 And you shall walk for ever in the calm
 Of His sweet Sabbath-day of perfect rest.

TWO LANDS.

"And the Lord said unto him, This is the land . . . I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes."

"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

THE song was hushed in the shadowy aisle, the responses died away,
 And the people looked at the preacher's face as if they should softly say,
 "What is the message the Master sends from the throne of His love and life
 To the sorrowful, struggling, fearful ones in the midst of the earth's wild strife?"

We saw a picture of long ago. The desolate miles of sand
 Stretched far away into dim, grey space, and we sighed for the
 barren land ;
 Before us in silence and solitude a mountain upreared its head,
 So lonely and grand was the purple height, as we looked we were
 filled with dread.

On the top of the mountain a white-haired man stood gazing with
 wistful eyes
 At a sunny river that flashed its smiles back to the cloudless skies,
 To the sloping banks where the wild flowers grew, and the grass
 was brightly green,
 And the brown corn waved on the fertile hills where the genial
 rains had been.

Little he thought, that lonely man, of the desolate wilderness
 Lying behind, while his face was turned to the country of blessed-
 ness.
 Did he care, though his feet were travel-stained—did he think of
 the parched sand ?
 Nay, for the wanderings all were done, and he looked on the
 promised land.

God had taken him up the height away from the wondering host,
 The people, wayward, yet dear to him and the work that he loved
 the most,
 And gave for his guerdon a long fond look at the land he had
 sighed to see,
 Then took him away to a fairer scene than the best of earth
 could be.

* * * * *

We thought in the hush of the Sabbath hour that often He does
 the same
 To His servants, weary and fainting now, who call on His
 mighty name.
 He takes us out of the wilderness to some solemn mountain height
 And bids us look at our promised land till we gather strength
 from the sight.

We see the hills where the ransomed ones rest in the light and
peace,
And the shining throne where they meet the King, and their joy
and bliss increase,
The streets of gold, and the gates of pearl, and the Face they
have loved so long,
And we strain our ears as in hope to catch some notes of the
holy song.

And we say as we turn from that home prepared, Truly, it matters
not,
Though shadows dwell on our sojourn-place, and dark is the
earthly lot,
For we shall not perish as Moses did ere we reached the promised
land,
But within the gates of Jerusalem our resting feet shall stand.

So we pass away from the house of God to sorrow perchance and
pain,
But we know that the sufferings will not stay while the joy and the
peace remain.
We will cheer each other a little while, obeying the Master's word,
And soon we shall stand on the other shore, for ever with Christ
the Lord.

MORNING AND EVENING PRAYERS.

No sooner steals the grey light of the morning
Over the mountain summits and green vales,
Than surging up to heaven amid the dawning
Is heard the mystic sound that aye prevails—
The cries of God's great hosts as one by one
They pray, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done."

Oh, what a wondrous sea of wistful faces
Flashes each morning upward to the skies !
What multitudes of hearts in many places
Beat high with hope before His watchful eyes,
Who hears through the first hours of every day
The pleadings of His children when they pray !

And of the host each has his own petition,
Each holds the Father with a " Notice *me*,"
One prayer speaks pensively of deep contrition,
One rings out joyously from souls set free ;
But each request, that is a prayer indeed,
Tells its own tale of individual need.

And He who listens from His throne of glory,
Gives from His treasure-house the blessing sought,
Turns to an anthem many a doleful story,
Grants hope to one, and to another thought,
Rest to the weary, strength to meet the day,
And sends His children down a brightening way.

The hours pass on, the noontide sun is glowing
Upon the workers busy at their tasks,
And each is happy who may labour, knowing
He has from God the wisdom that he asks.
And all are glad because the morning prayer
Has brought some succour or removed some care.

And then the day dies, and amid the gloaming
Once more the uplifted eyes the Father seek,
His children have come back from all their roaming,
And in the silence wait to hear Him speak
Some gracious words of the day's sins forgiven,
Some promise of the joy stored up in heaven.

Again the sounds of many voices calling
Move, mingling, heavenward through the misty air,
And from God's hands His blessings aye are falling—
Oh, wonderful is He who answers prayer !
What can exceed the power of God above,
Unless, indeed, it be His matchless love !

THE KING'S MESSAGE.

THE sounds of churchward-going feet
Had died away to evening's calm ;
There came no discord from the street
To mar the flow of praiseful psalm ;
And we ? We waited in the hush,
And wondered what the King would say
To help us in the world's wild rush
After our Sabbath holiday.
For though God smiles through sun and flowers,
In all the days of royal June,
We faintly owned there might be hours
When hearts of men were out of tune ;
And so we listened hopefully,
But heard the preacher's voice proclaim,
" Afresh the Lord they crucify,
And put Him to an open shame."

There was no message, then, for us !
Our hearts were leal, our faith was strong,
Would any pain the Master thus
Whose voices sang the evensong ?
Had not each said, " Abide with me,
The darkness deepens ; show Thy cross ; "
" Jesus, the very thought of Thee
Is sweetness after pain and loss " ?

So much we loved Him there were tears
Dimming our eyes the while we thought
Of Him, rejected through the years,
Forsaken, mocked, and set at naught.
Oh, not for us who faithfully
Extol Him, trust Him, praise His name,
The words "The Son they crucify,
And put Him to an open shame."

Yet, while the opals dyed the west,
And softly blew the evening breeze,
And sweetly closed the day of rest,
Our hearts were moved by words like these :
" Whoso to-day with coward heart
Hears Him reviled, yet dares not speak
And take in love the Master's part,
But, Peter-like, is false and weak :
Who, Pilate-like, can see the right,
And yet, for love of power and place,
Will choose the Son of God to slight,
And rather please the populace :
Whose heart is hard as winter's sod
The while he calls upon His name,
Still crucifies the Son of God,
And puts Him to an open shame.

" And he who with his heart and will
Follows the heroes of the world,
And chooses some Barabbas still,
Who has fame's blazing flag unfurled :
And he who throws around the King
The purple robe, yet serves Him not,
And kneels as if in worshipping,
Yet does not cast with Him his lot :
He, false of heart, and weak of will,
He, silent when he should be brave,
He, speaking well and doing ill,
Who Him from no revilers save,—

He makes his Saviour suffer pain,
 Though with his lips he lauds His name,
He crucifies God's Son again,
 And puts Him to an open shame."

We felt the evening round us creep,
 The sunlight slowly died away,
 And none would see though we should weep
 Within the shadows dark and grey ;
 For lo ! *our* heads were bowed with shame,
 As dimly we could comprehend
 That 'twas to us the message came
 From Him the King, the Christ, the Friend.
 And yet it was in love's distress
 We crept the closer to His feet,
 And prayed, " Forgive our faithlessness,
 And make us for Thyself more meet : "
 Then as we turned to duties nigh,
 We knew our hope was in His name,
 And cried, " Let us the rather die
 Than put Thee to an open shame."

LIFE'S WORK.

" He hath showed thee, O man, what is good : and what doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, and love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God."—MICAH.

Do you say there is no rest
 For the soul dismayed, opprest
 By the clamour of men's voices, and a multitude of creeds ?
 Are you sick of the word-war
 Raging where God's gardens are,
 While the trampers cannot settle which are flowers and which
 are weeds ?

Oh, you do not need to sigh
That you cannot well reply
To the arguments and reasons that are hurled about your ears ;
That you cannot talk as they,
Who are eager in the fray,
Because you have misgivings while they swear they have no fears.

For there is a source of rest !
Simple faith that hopes the best
Of the wondrous love of Jesus and God's tender fatherhood.
And until the soul has wings,
Can leave all the secret things—
This will keep the heart in quiet till the whole is understood.

And be sure that words are weak ;
'Tis the Christian's life must speak,
If he longs to have men listen to the good he has to say ;
And if you would have some might
To lead others to the light,
Do honestly and joyfully the duty of each day.

In this world too full of pain,
'Mid the selfish greed of gain,
Only try to lift the burden from some shoulders that are tired,
Having in you the Lord's mind,
Be ye lowly, just, and kind,
Though you fail to gain some treasures after which your hearts
aspired.

Know the Master does not ask
The good servant at his task
To explain the knotty questions that yet agitate the wise ;
But He smiles and says, Well done,
When love's victories are won,
And the good man marches straightly to his home above the skies.

PASSING PLEASURES.

THE summer glory shines
On heathery moor and purple mountain slopes
Like dawn of gladsome hopes :
And yet the joy declines !
There is a touch of something on the vines,
And trees and bushes, which shall steal away
The golden glory of the flower-clad way,
And bring at last the silence of the tomb,
And chill of winter's gloom.

No scent of violet
Is in the meadows now, no primrose pale
Smiles in the darkening vale,
And the grass, dewy wet,
Has kept within its folds no spring-flowers yet ;
Even the roses droop and hang their heads,
Or scatter petals on the changing beds,
And a low, plaintive song is sung all day—
Earth's fair things do not stay.

The cuckoo's voice is still ;
And though we listen in the leafy vale
We hear no nightingale,
Singing, with passion's thrill,
Her pleading madrigal by stream or rill.
And birds who merrily of pleasure sang,
The while the wild-woods budding branches rang,
Have hushed their songs until another spring
Again shall bid them sing.

And yet enough have we !
The golden corn is waving in the sun,
The harvest joy is won,
And ever merrily
Dance the glad waves of the sun-lighted sea.
Why should we sigh because the violets fade,
And the bright roses in the dust are laid ?
We cannot keep for aye our precious things ;
And those most dear have wings.

God help us that 'tis so !
For even summer tells of change and death,
And life is fleeting breath ;
Peace, love, and joy must go,
And leave us soon in solitude and woe
To see how cold and still the lips can be
That in our spring-time blessed us fervently.
We know how all things tender pass away,
And only God will stay.

It must be so, and yet
We have our golden harvests, and some flowers
To cheer autumnal hours ;
And though some suns may set,
The Lord will not forsake us, nor forget.
And He will give our meed of joy and love,
And presently a summer home above,
Where fading seasons are for ever past,
And all our joys will last.

THE SUMMER'S FAREWELL.

THE summer-time is o'er, and we listen never more
To the glad song of the bird as it sings among green trees ;
For these merry friends have fled, and the leaves are brown and
dead,
And for zephyr notes we have but the wailings of the breeze.

The summer-time is passed. Have we really looked our last
At the joy-inspiring face of our bright and loving friend ?
Does she take her flowers away ? Oh ! can nothing make her stay ?
And still wear her sunny robe till the year shall have its end ?

She can make the whole world glad, but you see how white and sad
Are the things she leaves behind as she passes from our sight :
All the flowers seem turning faint, and the winds make low
complaint,
And the skies pour down their tears till the day is like the night.

But never tear nor moan was strong enough alone
To keep the one we loved at our side for evermore ;
And although we held her fast, yet the summer at the last
Would slip from out our arms, as she oft has done before.

So we can but let her go, and remember in our woe
That she will not take away all the brightness from our days ;
We shall not be quite bereft, we shall have some brave flowers left,
And the dark paths of the winter shall sometimes have sunny
rays.

The summer-time has gone, but we are not then forlorn,
For the sunshine in our spirits will remain the winter through ;
We'll forget the parting pain till our friend comes back again,
And she then will find our hearts firm and loyal, strong and true.

And her absence shall but make labour sweeter, for love's sake,
For 'tis not for such as we to sit down and idly rest ;
Let the summer sunshine go, we have work to do below,
And the God we love and serve can make winter bright and best.

AUTUMN WINDS.

THEY hurry forth from their hiding-place,
Untamed, unchecked, and wild ;
They strike the passer-by in the face,
Then stay to caress a child ;
They beat the boughs from the tall, strong trees,
Then play with the lowly flowers,
And strangely weird are the songs they sing
Through the bright October hours.

They sweep the clouds from the azure sky,
And the twinkling stars shine forth ;
They are warm and strong, and they fight the cold
Back to its home in the North ;
They lift the veil from the sun's bright face,
And laugh in their noisy glee,
When the trembling trees and the flying leaves
Confess how great they be.

They whistle shrilly around the house,
And the boys obey the call,
Then they pelt them merrily one by one
With the apple-showers that fall ;
They scatter nuts in the woodland ways,
And they make the branches ring,
While the birds in wonder hide away
And listen while they sing.

They make quick work of the yellow leaves
That are dying a lingering death,
They sweep them down with a mighty blast,
And scatter them with a breath ;
They help to bury them in their graves
Below on the soddened ground,
And they sing their requiem mournfully
Where the branches bare abound.

They spread their wings, and away they fly
Over the startled waves,
Which upward leap as in mad affright,
Or plunge in the hidden caves ;
They toss the ships in their giant arms,
And then, when the people die,
It seems that their furious might is spent,
And they pass with a mournful sigh.

But we know full well that the autumn winds,
In playful or angry mood,
Rush o'er the world at the Lord's behest,
And their errand is one of good ;
And wild as they are, they obey the King,
And their strife and fury cease
(Like all the storms and the wrath of earth)
As soon as He whispers "Peace."

THE WEALTHY LAND.

"The kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it."

THOUGH the dark November shadows comes to me a glimpse of
light,
my longing eyes, drawn thither, see the land of no more night,
ere perpetual summer shineth, and about the great white throne
py hosts are singing ever, "Victory through the Christ alone."

In that land of lasting sunshine are no fading flowers of earth,
Only fragrant aramanthines and bright evergreens have birth ;
And the song of praise and gladness that is filling the clear air
Has no sighs to check its sweetness, for no thought of woe is there.

None is poor who gains that country, for the wealth is gathered in
From the centuries that slowly vanished in this world of sin ;
All the greatness and the glory, strength of mind and wealth of soul,
Are contributed to render that fair land so grandly whole.

There they are. The light of genius burns within the "mansions"
fair ;
Bravest hearts that beat with courage and strong hands that
wrought are there ;
Lips made eloquent and fervent, artist fingers, poet hearts—
All have found some higher service and are busied at their parts.

Yet the lowly who shall venture through the gates in Jesus' name,
Who have done no deeds of prowess, and whose words have won
no fame,
Shall receive an equal welcome. Children of the family
Have a right to see the Father, though His weakest ones they be.

So the happy home is filling. Each new hour of every day,
From the fogs of earth's November some glad spirit steals away,
Gaining with a thrill of pleasure woe and pain for joy and health,
Leaving all distress and hunger for abundant, truest wealth.

And a whisper floats among us, "Are you ready? You shall come
From the land where leaves are fading, to the eternal summer
home."
And we lift our eyes with pleading when we catch the welcome
song—
"We are ready ; oh, receive us in the fatherland ere long."

BROUGHT NEARER.

THEY sighed for utter weariness ; their steps were weak and slow ;
And must the burden of their life pursue where'er they go ?
They cared not for the mountain glooms, nor the lights of sea and
shore ;
It seemed that they would laugh and sing for pleasure nevermore.

They smiled with scorn at the noisy glee of the young upon the
beach ;
And said, " They, too, will have to learn the lessons life can teach ;"
They scarcely spoke together but in angry tones of strife,
For their love had faded with their youth, and left a joyless life.

And yet, and yet, they missed the bliss that a strong, true love can
bring,
And they sometimes sighed in secret thought for its early vanishing ;
They knew, though they would not own the truth, that the life is
sad and vain,
When two who dwell beneath one roof needs give the other pain.

They sat one day in a shady place, and looked across the sea,
Nor heeded two who rested near, with a joy that all could see ;
But they heard the words that were whispered low, " When I am
old and grey,
Will your love for me be tender, dear, as I see it is to-day ? "

The answer came, and it stirred the hearts of the two who over-
heard,
For their bright glad youth came back again, brought by a
whispered word ;
And their eyes looked out as they had not done in the other's face
for years,
While the woman's filled with a strange sweet mist of pleading,
hopeful tears.

"Oh, darling, do you love me yet? Can the old joy come again?

We have lost much time, but a few bright months perchance for us remain—

Shall we make them fair as we meant to do?" Ah, the young were not more gay

Than the two who found their joy, though late, on the summer holiday.

HOME FROM WORK.

HOME from work when day is done,

Pass the rapid, willing feet ;

Home from work at set of sun,

Go the toilers through the street,

Each tired face becoming bright

As it sees the soft home-light.

Weary eyes that looked all day

Where the busy hands have wrought,

Now in leisure glance away,

While the mind grows glad with thought,

Seeing in the light and shade

How serene God's world is made.

Yet they have not laggard feet,

These tired workers ; love impels ;

They can hear while in the street

Music sweet as Sabbath bells,

And their dear ones' welcome song

Seems to urge their steps along.

So they linger not outside,
But pass through the friendly door,
For they know with eventide
All the toil and pain are o'er ;
Home is bright at set of sun,
Home is dear when work is done.

Little children climb their knees,
Wifely eyes look up with smiles,
Loving spirits strive to please,
Happy talk the time beguiles,
And while darker grows the west
Thankful hearts bless God for rest.

Home from work when day is done,
Pass we all with rapid feet,
Home from work at set of sun,
Till we gain the golden street—
This shall be our lot at last
When life's toiling-time is past.

May God grant the joy to see
The familiar portals shine,
And our loved ones, long set free,
Waiting in the light divine,
So that all together blest
In our Father's house may rest.

NEWS.

(2 SAM. i.)

A HUNTED man, who feared the hunter's power,
Rested from conflict. He had fought and won,
And Amalek was slaughtered ; but his heart
Was sad and fearful, as he thought of those

Who on Gilboa met the mighty host
Of the Philistines. He had known long nights
Of terror, hidden in the lonely caves
While ruthless Saul had sought the fugitive
With armies of brave men. He had known want
And hunger : he had parted from his friends,
And far from where the praises of his God
Were sung in Zion, he had pined away
In solitude and grief. But not of this
Thought he the while he waited for the news,
But of a lowly boy who kept the sheep
In Bethlehem's green fields, and of a friend,
Who took the shepherd lad into his heart
In fealty and love. He felt once more
The thrilling touch of the old prophet's hands
Anointing him for service. Then he thought
Of slain Goliath, and the grateful king,
Who opened wide the palace-home for him,
And bade him dwell in peace. And as his mind
Lingered upon these days he half forgot
The jealousy of Saul, and thanked his God
That when he saw his foe within the cave
He did not take his life, but for the sake
Of the good days of friendship that had passed
He spared the king.

But while he mused on these,
There came a messenger whose clothes were rent
And who had earth upon his head as one
Who weeps for great disaster. David's eyes
Sought eagerly his face. "What news?" he cried.
And the man told a tale of sore defeat,
And how the king had died by his own hand,
And that the princes had been slain with him.
Did David then rejoice that the king's crown
Should rest upon his head? And that at last
The honour promised him so long ago
Was his? Nay; love is strong, and David mourned
For those whose faces he should see no more.

"The mighty are fallen, the beauty is slain,
Let not the Philistines rejoice o'er their gain ;
Oh, keep the sad secret, and mourn for the dead,
The mighty is fallen, in dust lies his head.

"Ye mounts of Gilboa, what dewdrops or rain
Shall bring their refreshing upon you again ?
For the valorous warriors have died with the day,
And the shield of the mighty has been cast away.

"Oh ! daughters of Israel, weep for the slain !
The lovely and pleasant ones come not again :
For Saul and my Jonathan, pleasant in life,
Have departed together, and passed through the strife.

"Jonathan, slain in high places wast thou,
And the night-winds have beaten in wrath on thy brow ;
The mighty are fallen, and I am distressed
For my friend and my brother, the brave and the blessed.

"Oh ! pleasant indeed hast thou been unto me,
Thy love was more tender than woman's could be,
And shall I not weep for thee ? Sad was the day
When the death-angel summoned my brother away."

The king was dead, and David and his men
Went unto Hebron. He, the faithful friend,
Who loved forgiveness, and was true and strong,
Was he not worthy of the kingly crown ?

LAST FLOWERS.

Is it long, long ago since together we went
To the brown, budding woods where the violets grew,
And found, after search, to our joy and content,
A few scented blossoms of bright purple hue?
It is long, long ago. We remember to-day
How blue were the skies, and how keen was the air;
And we knew that the cuckoo was then on its way,
And the nightingale soon would pour out its love-prayer.

The world was expectant, and bright days of spring
Brought the cowslips and primroses into the dell,
And gladly we listened to hear the birds sing,
When the buds on the trees were beginning to swell;
And soon all the hawthorns were robed in pure white,
And bright apple-blossoms fell down like soft snow,
And pleasant long days stole the hours from the night,
And we welcomed the summer in, long, long ago.

Then the roses were bright on the hedges and trees,
And the corn became golden when kissed by the sun,
And the sea flashed its silver beams forth to the breeze,
And we knew that the crown of the summer was won;
For the brave poppies lifted their faces that blushed,
And the little heartsease peeped about it to see
If the songs of the nightingales ever were hushed,
Or the earth had a spot where the flowers might not be.

But now, though we look 'mid the fern and the brake
For the flowers we have loved, they are not to be seen;
For the fading-time came the sweet blossoms to take,
And they died, though the land was yet covered with green.

Oh ! sweet flowers of summer ! we give them regret,
 They have smiled on our joy and we gave them our love ;
 But we know, though they fade, there are brighter ones yet,
 That grow in our Father's fair garden above.

And this, too, we know—as we journey along
 Over paths that are rough, beneath skies that are cold,
 He gives us the pleasures of flowers and of song,
 And hopes of the city whose stones are of gold.
 So we gather these blossoms, and hold them most dear,
 They shall solace our hearts till the spring comes again ;
 When the summer has passed, and the dark days are here,
 We shall know that these flowers will for ever remain.

OCTOBER.

WHEN the parting hour is nearest
 Friends become to us the dearest,
 And we love the summer's fairness while she waits to say good-bye ;
 We respond in tones of sorrow,
 For we dread the dark to-morrow,
 When the sun shall shine no longer, and the grey is in the sky.

But we have some hours of pleasure
 Which we thankfully will treasure,
 While the gaysome flowers are blooming, and the grapes are on the
 vine ;
 For the forests still are ringing
 With sweet songs the birds are singing,
 And the light-flecked ferns and mosses smile whene'er the sun doth
 shine.

But the drooping of the sedges
And the berries on the hedges,
And the swaying of trees roseless, all proclaim the summer's death.
In the woods the nuts are falling,
The departing birds are calling,
And the trees blush deeply crimson when they feel the North wind's
breath.

So we know that with the heather
Will depart the summer weather,
And the fogs of dull November shall come swiftly in the train;
And the flowers that will not grieve us,
By the haste with which they leave us,
Will have all their beauty stolen by the breezes and the rain.

But we hail with right good cheer,
The October of the year,
For it has a charm that moves us, though it is the fading time;
And we love the changing leaves,
Coming after harvest sheaves,
And the breezes that make music ere the bells begin to chime.

And we'll all be bright together,
In the sunny autumn weather,
For the God who sends the sunshine also sends the winds and
showers;
Even winter brings no sadness
Unto hearts o'er full of gladness,
And our songs shall know no failing in the fading of the flowers.

FADED LEAVES.

"GIVE us graves ! We danced for pleasure in the joyous days of
spring,
We applauded the glad music of the birds with folded wing ;
But we now are old and dying." So in plaintive notes they sing—
Faded leaves.

"Give us graves ! We gave you shelter when the sun burnt
through the air,
And we whispered our devotions when the breeze bore up your
prayer.
Give us pity ! Through the summer, what has made your earth-
home fair,
But the leaves ?

"Give us graves ! We have known gladness, but we all have
suffered pain,
Mighty winds have rudely shaken, we were beaten by the rain ;
Though we tried to bear up bravely, we succumb, and but remain
Faded leaves.

"All is over ; the bright glancing when the warm sun kissed our
faces,
All the beauty, and the laughter, and the pleasant airs and graces,
And our dying, last petition is for quiet resting-places,"
Said the leaves.

"All is over ; the sad questions unto life which answered not,
All the pleadings, and the sighings which make up our earthly lot.
He who made us bids us perish. He, the Good, has not forgot
Faded leaves."

So they die ! We look upon them, we, who never Autumn knew,
But have found that with November some fresh sorrow sought us,
too,
And have buried, weeping softly, underneath some spreading yew,
Faded leaves.

And we find a pensive comfort in the mournful dirge they sing ;
We have had our days of brightness ; long ago we passed our
spring ;
And it needs that early winter with its chilling winds must bring
Faded leaves.

But the summer always follows, and the young leaves bud again,
And God sends His blessed sunshine after darksome hours of
pain.


Let us spend these months in patience, shortly we shall look in
vain

For faded leaves.

OCTOBER SEAS.

BUT yesterday the sun lay on the sea,
And gently kissed away its roughnesses,
Until the laughing waves played merrily,
And sang together low, sweet melodies ;
And seemed so far removed from wind or storm
That one could dream of summer, soft and warm.

The day before the wind rose in its might,
And lashed the waves and made the waters groan
Until they towered aloft in awful height,
Then sank in graves unquiet with a moan.
And then arose again to strong, wild life,
And took their part once more in fiercest strife.



To-day the storm is quiet, and the sun
Has shrouded his bright face in grey thick veils ;
The skies, once gay, are clothed in robes of dun,
And the sea's songs are changed to dismal wails ;
The waves have quite forgotten all their mirth,
And with dull, sullen blows they strike the earth.

Our life is very like October seas !
We have our gladsome days of cheerful light,
When flowers and songs and sunbeams join to please,
And moon and stars shine through the tranquil night
And hearts and voices all unite to raise
To God on high a grateful song of praise.

And there are times when life is one fierce fight,
When foes are many and the strife is long ;
And when we fain would struggle for the right,
We are opposed by forces of the wrong ;
And the storm roars as if it ne'er would cease
Into a pleasant calm of light and peace.

And then, anon, there is the dismal rain,
Which falls upon our life and makes it sad ;
And mists and fogs are thick, until again
The sun shines forth, and all the scene is glad,
And the grey clouds are swiftly driven away,
And life is like a fair October day.

But well we know that through our changeful lot
That brings, alternately, the sun and shade,
The Father, in His love, forgets us not,
And we will trust Him still, nor be afraid.
For all His days are good, and we shall stand
At last within the heavenly summer land.

THE END OF A GOOD LIFE.

(DEUT. xxxiv. 5.)

THE glory of the sunset touched his face,
And his brave heart was filled with peaceful joy,
Because, after his life's long day of busy toil,
The rest hour gently came. The good old man,
Who oft had seen the Father face to face,
And knew the sweetness of the love of God,
Had offered for himself his one last prayer,
And been denied. In meek and childlike trust,
As one who sinned and yet had been forgiven,
He rested in the perfect will of God.
But when the shadow thickened on the path,
And the mysterious warning filled his soul,
And by these signs he knew the end had come,
He sang his last glad song of grateful praise,
That all the elders of the tribes might hear.

"Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak
As the rain-drops fall when the dark clouds break ;
I publish the name of the Lord Most High,
Who liveth for ever, though frail man die.

"Remember the days and the years of old,
And the mercies of God by thy fathers told.
In the desert land and the wilderness
He found the hosts whom He meant to bless,
And the places high, and the good estate
He gave to him who was desolate.

"Oh, do not forget Him, thy God, thy strength,
Who has brought thee near to thy land at length ;

Oh, do not forget Him, but speak His praise,
Who blesses, crowns, and prolongs thy days,
But set thy hearts unto all His words,
Oh, happy people who are the Lord's !”

And in the self-same day, God spake to him :
“ Go, get thee up into Mount Abarim,
And see the land to which My people go ;
But thou shalt die to-day upon the mount,
Thou shalt not enter in and see the vines,
Nor rest beneath the cedars and the palms,
Nor hear the birds sing happy madrigals,
In the good land of plenty and of peace.”
Moses complained not. God would aye do well
His servant knew. He did but stay to speak
Some blessing words, and then prepared to go.

“ God bless His people ! I may not stand
In the fertile fields of the promised land ;
But I think of the day when the tribes repair
To the Holy Place for their praise and prayer,
And God shall bless them with good increase,
And fill their hearts with His sacred peace.

“ Let Reuben live, and he shall not die,
And his friends be with him continually.
Let Judah's hands be enough for him,
And Levi shine nor his light be dim,
And the Lord's beloved be safe always,
Since God shall cover him all the day.

“ Let Joseph sing of the precious things,
Of the lasting hills, and the sheltering wings,
And Zebulun rejoice with song,
And Issachar the strain prolong,
And Gad, and Dan, and Naphtali,
And Asher praise the Lord Most High.

"Oh, Israel, none is like to thee !
Oh, land of light, where the Lord shall be !
He is thy Refuge, His arms are thine,
He giveth thee riches of corn and wine ;
And He is the King who shall fight for thee,
Oh, Israel, fair shall thy future be !"

Then with a last fond look upon the hosts
Whom he so long had loved and led, he turned
And climbed the mountain. There he saw the land
And did he weep ? I think he was so glad
To take his place upon the fairer heights
Of the celestial country, and to rest with God,
That when he felt His mouth upon his own,
Moses the leader died for very joy !

THE REAPERS.

MERRILY working from dawn to dark,
See how the reapers toil !
A bountiful harvest is in the fields
Where lately they ploughed the soil ;
The corn is waving for joy of life,
And gladly the reapers come,
And they sharpen their sickles, and bending low,
They hasten the harvest home.

They are slaying the poppies with ruthless hands,
As they cut the ripe corn down ;
And the stubble covers the broad, bare fields
Instead of the golden crown ;
But the reapers are gathering grains of life
With each cut of the bright, keen blade :
And bread for the winter is in the ears
That low at their feet are laid.

Good speed to the reapers ! They need not care
For the bright-hued flowers that die,
For the scarlet colours, and fair blue tints,
That prone on the dark ground lie ;
They have higher duties and nobler work
Than to stay for the hindering flowers,
And the golden grain shall be garnered soon,
As guerdon for toiling hours.

Good speed to the reapers ! Their merry songs
Steal up through the morning's calm,
And their cheery voices are in the lanes,
At the time of the even-psalm.
They take their rest with a quiet heart,
Thinking of labour done :
They will rise again with a right good will
And reap with to-morrow's sun.

Good speed to the reapers ! I watch them work,
And think of my crop to reap ;
'Tis a wealthy harvest, I well might rise
And labour while others sleep ;
But I cared too much for the flowers that grow
Nor thought enough of the grain ;
I will go and work in my fields of corn,
Toiling and getting gain.

Good speed to the reapers ! An eager band
Of sowers went forth to sow,
'Tis the harvest time, and they come again
To the fields where the brown ears grow.
And I soon shall be bringing my harvest home,
In the autumn that yet shall be,
For God, who is kind to the feeble ones,
Has promised this joy to me.

OUR DWELLING PLACE.

How rapidly through all the mist and rain,
That fill the street, men hasten home to-night !
The day is long for labour, and tired heads
Think with a thrill of pleasure of the rest
That cometh soon. Even the while their eyes
Look down on growing fabric, they can see
Another picture of a glowing fire
And well-spread table, and a smiling face
That waits to give them welcome. Or if books
Employ their hours they see within the page
The merry children stopping from their play
To listen for the loved and well-known step
Along the hall. If among loud machines
The day is passed, there is an undertone
Of soft, low music heard near eventide
Within the soul, that tells of coming joy,
And charms away the weariness and care
From heart and brow.

And when the hour has come,
That like the curfew rings for happy rest,
And like the vesper chimes to bring the soul
To prayer and praise, how soon the books are shut,
The tools thrown down, the noises made to cease,
And the glad toilers, from their labour freed,
Go quickly to the homes that all the day
Have sweetly called them ! Do they mind the cold ?
The keen discomfort of the chilly streets ?
The pitiless encounter with the rain ?
The frowning skies, and the unfriendly wind ?
Or do they stay to quarrel with the crowd

That elbows them ? Or linger to complain ?
Oh, wiser they ! They do but hasten on
Until the home is gained ! They lose no time,
But reach the door and pass into the light,
And smile their greetings to dear household bands,
And lose all care in ministries of love.

So dear are earthly homes, so strong and safe
And full of rest, for Thou hast made them so,
God of our fathers ! And we bless Thy love
For all the light and joy they hold for us,
The toilers and the wanderers. But more
We thank Thee that we dare look up and say,
Thou art our dwelling-place, our fortress strong,
And unto Thee we constantly resort.
The winter of our life, with winds and storms,
Has beaten on us, but through all the day
The prelude has been sounding in our hearts,
And in the eventide we sing to Thee :—

“ We are coming home, for the day is done,
Gone is the light of the fitful sun,
The toils are over, the tasks complete,
The mists are filling the dreary street ;
And now we are longing for joy and rest,
For the love of our Father to make us blest,
And wheresoever Thy children be
O Lord, they are coming home to Thee.

“ We are coming home through the driving rain,
We are bending low 'neath a weight of pain,
The world has wearied us all to-day,
And at even we gladly haste away ;
Oh, sweet to the tired is the warm home-light,
And we watch for its glimmer amid the night,
We are hurrying home where our dear ones be,
O Lord, we are coming home to Thee.

"We are coming home. We have fought our foes,
With only a thought of the night's repose,
The battle was very severe and long,
But now we are singing the victor's song,
We shall rest, and softly the shadows creep,
And the weary need not to stay and weep,
For calm and deep shall our slumbers be
Since home we are coming, Lord, to Thee.

"We are coming home, and the hastening feet
Are heard through the noise of the busy street,
Our hearts are glad in the twilight dim,
We sing in rapture our vesper hymn ;
We are not afraid of the last long night,
We shall look in Thy face, for our dawning light,
We shall have our heaven when Thee we see ;
Thou art our home and we come to Thee."

A MESSAGE FROM THE SEA.

"They see Jesus walking on the sea. He saith unto them, 'It is I; be not afraid.'"

THE old scene comes to us to-day !
We by the waves are seeking rest,
And gladly watch the water's play,
And note the changes on its breast.
And as we see the shadows meet
In minglings soft of sea and sky,
We fain would hear the whisper sweet,
"Be not afraid ; 'tis I."

And life is like a sea again !
And lo ! we hear these words of love,
We, tossed about in grief and pain,
Receive them from the heights above ;
Though rolling thunder rends the air,
Though darkness falls where sunlight played,
We hear, responsive to our prayer,
" 'Tis I ; be not afraid."

And when again the sea is calm,
And balmy airs caress our face,
And all things join in praiseful psalm,
Because they know the Father's grace,
Lest we should fear the joy to take,
And in mistrust should seek the shade,
We are made happy for His sake,
Who says, " Be not afraid."

And when the big white waves are curled,
When winds are fierce and tempests long,
When the storm banners are unfurled,
And the destroyer shrieks his song,
Then, bringing quiet with His voice,
He speaks and we are not dismayed,
But trembling hearts for love rejoice,
He says, " Be not afraid."

Sometimes the mist is on the sea,
We cannot tell where lies the land,
And we are drifting helplessly
Toward some unknown, unlighted strand ;
But He, amid the unrest and doubt,
Proclaims Himself a Saviour nigh,
And fear and darkness are cast out --
" Be not afraid ; 'tis I."

O Christ, our Master, Life, and Light,
 It is enough if Thou wilt stay ;
 We will not fear the darkest night,
 Nor the hot beams of glaring day ;
 Be with us still in weal and woe,
 Until the gloaming fills the sky,
 And let us hear, where'er we go,
 " Be not afraid ; 'tis I."

MET AGAIN.

" WILL you come?" (The youths and maidens brought ashore
 the little boat.)

" On this calm, sunlighted water it is joy to be afloat ;
 You can help us with our singing ; we will choose your favourite
 hymn,
 And you need not fear the danger ; we could save you : I can
 swim."

But she shook her head, replying, " I am idle, I will stay
 In the little cove beyond us, and will watch you sail away,
 And so wait for your returning, resting, reading as I please ;
 I have come too near the evening to desire to brave the seas."

So with laughing words they left her, and she sought a pleasant
 nook.

Gracious solace for the lonely is a bright, well-written book.
 " They are happier without me, they the blithe of heart and gay,
 They are kindly, but they do not need a woman turning grey.

" They are in life's merry morning, but with me 'tis afternoon ;
 I can see the shadows creeping, and the eventide comes soon.
 Ah ! the day is quickly over ; but I am not therefore sad,
 Little has the world around me that can make my spirit glad !"

Then the woman's face grew graver, for she thought of by-gone
years,
Thought until her eyes were darkened by a mist of falling tears,
Thought of far-away fair summers, when, a lover by her side,
She received as meet the praises that are lavished on a bride.

But a whisper came between them, and her heart grew hot with
rage ;
In a fit of youthful passion she had caused a joyless age !
For her lover scorned and left her for the bitter words she said,
And she did not see him after. Now white hairs were on her head.

Oh ! perhaps 'twas little wonder that her eyes were filled with
tears,
As she sat in the cliffs' shadow and remembered dreary years ;
But a hope arose within her : " God is merciful, He may
Give the joy that I have longed for ere I pass from earth away.

"And if not, the bliss of pardon which the Saviour makes so
sweet,
Will perhaps be mine for ever when at last we two shall meet
Where the old ills are forgotten, and the old regret and pain
From the purer life shall vanish while the love shall aye remain."

So the woman in her musings looked across the smiling sea,
And it seemed to give the promise of a better life to be.
Then the tumult of her spirit died away and she was calm,
As she softly sang within her some old words of trustful psalm.

Then an object threw a shadow on the grass about her feet,
And her glance was quickly lifted, but a stranger's face to meet.
Yet, was he indeed a stranger? She had seen him long ago,
And the sudden recognition flushed her face with youthful glow.

Then she bowed her head with sorrow. Had the meeting come
too late?

But he spoke in gentle accents, "Dear, my life is desolate ;
Shall the quarrel be forgotten? Shall we two make love again,
And so brighten for each other the life's years that yet remain?"

So the sequel of the story may be guessed. The boat returned,
And the merry youths and maidens in the woman's face discerned
The great glory of a pleasure that had come when hope had fled,
"All our youthful merry-making is not like *that joy*," they said.

A PRAYER FOR THE TIMES.

(WRITTEN DURING THE LATE WAR.)

THERE'S a terrible sound of a fierce death-rattle
Coming o'er acres of golden corn,
The cries of men who are slain in battle,
The shrieks of widow-hearts left forlorn.

God, send the morn !

Be not silent when men are calling,
And earth is darkened by sin and wrong.
King of the nations, before Thee falling,
We groan in spirit, O Lord, how long ?
How long ?

There is awful carnage. The burning village
Sends its smoke to Thy peaceful skies,
And men, like demons, grow mad for pillage,
And fiercely laugh at their victims' cries.

O God, arise !

Come to the world that is sad and bleeding,
To hearts that in sobbing forget their song,
To a torn and desolate country, needing
A God for Helper. O Lord, how long ?
How long ?

We have been saying, The times are better,
Light and sweetness have blessed the earth,
The hand is eager to break the fetter,
The heart is longing to prove Love's worth
Since Peace had birth.
And lo ! we have shame instead of glory,
And terrible pictures of crime and wrong,
And our faces burn as we hear the story
Of sin and horror ! O Lord, how long ?
How long ?

We have had hope that the world was stealing,
Surely if silently nearer Thee,
Bending its head to Thy hand of healing,
Lifting eyes upward Thy face to see ;
But it cannot be !
How shall we own these men as brothers,
Whose deeds of horror before us throng ?
How have hope of this land or others,
When earth is groaning for sin and wrong ?
How long ?

God of patience, we stand and wonder,
With hearts indignant and flashing eyes :
Shall not the wicked be rent asunder,
And fire come down from the opening skies ?
O God, arise !
Thou canst punish the mad offender ;
Do we not know that Thine arm is strong ?
Yet forgive us and make us tender
The while we murmur, O Lord, how long ?
How long ?

Help us to pray to Thee, God our Father,
Not for vengeance, but for Thy peace ;
Let the day come when we all shall gather,
Knowing Thy kingdom has great increase,
And war shall cease.

Our hearts are sad for the shot and rattle,
The cries of hate, and the warriors' song ;
King of nations, oh, end the battle,
And let right come from the awful wrong.
O Lord, how long ?

THE LOVE OF JESUS.

“ When He had heard, therefore, that Lazarus was sick, He abode two days still in the same place where He was.”

HAD I been there, as neighbours dwell, I would have said that day,
“ And have you sent to tell the Lord ? Then He will not delay,
Already He is on the road, and we may look for Him,
Perhaps—for He will swiftly come—before the day is dim ;
O Mary, when the gloaming falls, and the red hues paint the west,
Your home shall be a sanctuary, for Christ shall make it blest.”

And then I would have often looked adown the darkening street,
And waited, with hushed heart and breath, for the quick tread of
His feet,
And (for my fancy or my faith would surely paint His face)
I would have breathed glad words of hope, and lighted up the
place.

I know the Master, and I know He cannot hear unmoved
The pleading message of sad hearts, which love Him and are loved.

But what I should have said to them, during His strange delay,
And how have checked their questionings, I am ashamed to say ;
I could not counsel patient hope to Martha's eager heart,
Nor comfort the sad, quiet one who choose the better part ;
I should myself in fretful haste have asked, “ Can He thus love,
And yet His wondrous tenderness by silent absence prove ? ”

But if I had, when Jesus came, and I had seen His face,
And marked His quiet might of love, His sweetness and His grace,
I should have known my gloomy doubts had wronged the faithful
 Lord,
I would have owned my fault before the Master spoke a word,
And, kneeling at His feet, have said, "O Christ, Thy love is great,
Thou wilt not fail Thy loving ones although Thou comest late."

And should I thus have spoken then? And what words have I
 now?

I boast my knowledge of the King, my fealty I vow;
But still He tries His faithful ones with painful, strange delays;
And do I bear them patiently, and always sing His praise?
I bend my head for very shame; I cannot doubt His love,
And yet I grieve Him by my tears when He my trust would prove.

But life has taught me day by day how great His tenderness;
He sometimes keeps us hoping, but He cannot fail to bless;
He waits and watches, but at last He comes right royally,
To heal the sick, to raise the dead, and set the captive free.
And since I know the Master thus, and His great love to me,
I will be quiet and content until His heaven I see.

THE FATHER.

"He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father."—JESUS.

WHY do the children fear Him?
They know not the loving heart
Of Jehovah the great and mighty
In which they have each a part.

They dream that He speaks like thunder,
That a dark frown veils His face,
They shrink from His look of lightning
When they come to the meeting-place.

How little they know the Father !
But the Son they have seen and known.
Did He speak to the people roughly ?
And had He a heart of stone ?
Did He punish the least transgressions ?
Did He utter the word Forgiven ?
And was He not known to promise
A place He prepared in heaven ?

Once, the faces were white with hunger
Which He saw in a listening crowd.
Was it nothing to Him ? His pity
Spread over them like a cloud ;
He fed them while they were resting,
He blessed them when they were sad,
And they went to their homes at even
With hearts that were calm and glad.

They brought Him a sinful woman,
He knew she was desolate,
He joined not the hard intruders
Who were panting with rage and hate.
"Neither do I condemn thee ;
Go thou and sin no more,"
Gently He said ; and the woman
Knew that her grief was o'er.

A leper, alone and homeless,
Pressed to His side one day ;
Did the Master spurn and blame him,
Bidding him haste away ?

Nay, laying His hand upon him,
"Thou shalt be clean," He said ;
And happy, whole, and forgiven,
The man on his bright way sped.

And so did He love all people
That He gave His life for His foes.
They crowned Him with thorns and mocked Him,
But He patiently bore His woes.
He died desiring them greatly
And praying for them at last.
Can they doubt the love of the Master
When they think of the solemn past ?

And He had the Father's spirit,
He was the Father's word.
Oh, why should the children fear Him
When they listen to Christ the Lord ?
Closely we press toward Him
Till we lean on His sheltering breast,
Can we fear the Almighty Father
Who giveth us love and rest ?

A SUNDAY FROM HOME.

THE winds chant solemn litanies ;
And rippling waters of the lake
In undertones responses make
To the prayer-sighs amid the trees.

The purple mountains stretch away
Into grey clouds ; and crags and heights
Have mystic shadows, and fair lights
Spread o'er them on this quiet day.

So deep the silence reigning round,
There scarcely is a song of bird
Or human voice in converse heard,
Or any old familiar sound :

Only the waters, and the winds,
And the glad leaves that dance and play,
Keeping perpetual holiday,
Make melodies of sweetest kinds.

It is a spot to sit and dream
Of perfect love and joyous heaven,
And states wherein no hearts are riven,
Where comforts stay and pleasures gleam.

It is a place to think of Him
Who walked upon the tossing sea,
And on the shores of Galilee
Brightened the lives that had been dim ;

Who loved the mountain solitude,
And breathed the fields' refreshing air,
And spent the solemn nights in prayer,
And went about in doing good ;

Who comes to each sequestered place
To-day, till lonely hearts rejoice
In the great comfort of His voice,
And the revealings of His face.

And so, although no psalm is heard,
Nor preacher's sermon teaches us,
We yet may reach the Master thus,
While by His name our hearts are stirred.

We meet Him on the green hill-side,
We see His face behind the cloud,
And hear His voice far from the crowd,
And feel Him where the waters glide.

And gladly, strangers in the west,
We join the psalm and litanies
Of rippling waves and whispering trees
And bless Him for this time of rest.

VIOLETS IN NOVEMBER.

WHEN the brown leaves fall in showers
And no sunbeams light the hours,
But the fog is lying thickly in the field and in the street ;
When the autumn winds are sad,
And the earth in mourning clad
Has no smiles of joy nor comfort,—whence can come the violets
sweet ?

Like a miracle they come,
When the birds of spring are dumb,
And they bring a pleasant vision of green nooks and mossy dells,
And they steal away the gloom
From the early darkening room,
For the story is all cheery which each purple blossom tells.

Do the violets forget
That the land is dull and wet ?
That the sunny days are over, and the winter hastens near ?
That the winds are sharp and keen
Round the homes where they have been ?
That most flowers have long since faded from the land too cold
and drear ?

Nay ; they had a happier lot,
For in some secluded spot,
Where a friendly shelter hid them from the rough October blast,
They have flourished, though alone,
And the purple flowers have shown
That some early blessings linger though the summer-time is past.

And they have a word to say
On this dull November day,
Unto whomsoever looks at them with loving, watchful eyes :
“ In the darkest time, God’s love
Sends some token from above,
That His children may be comforted and grow, through patience,
wise.

“ These are links that come between
Times of joy that once have been
And another spring’s fair brightness that is yet so far away,
And the winter is but brief,
And all sorrow has relief,
And some joy is always present to meek hearts that wait and pray.”

"I WILL NEVER LEAVE THEE."

CAME to me in early days,
Ere I entered life's thick maze,
A low voice that spoke to me
Of a heart's fidelity,
And amid my childhood's play
Often stole my thoughts away,
As like blessing-music fell
Words that now I know so well,
"I will never leave thee."

Since that day how frequently
They have come again to me !
When I stood on mountain heights
Happy in the morning lights,
Or within the shadowy vale
When the skies grew cold and pale ;
When the flowers in clouds sprang up,
And I drank of pleasure's cup,
Or when faded leaves were spread
O'er my path, the voice still said,
"I will never leave thee."

Times have been when tempests beat,
And I suffered great defeat ;
When loved comrades fell away,
Till it seemed that none would stay ;
But amid the storm's wild rush
There has come a solemn hush
Over life's too-troubled sea,
For a Friend has said to me
"I will never leave thee."

Now and then my days have been
Brilliant in a sunny scene,
And, content with pleasures near,
I have felt the world most dear ;
But to keep my heart at rest
On the highest and the best,
Lest I clung too fast to earth,
He has whispered through the mirth,
“ I will never leave thee.”

What can come of grief or song
While I pace the path along
That shall cause His words to fail ?
Nay, they always must prevail ;
Be the future what it may,
There is light to cheer the way,
And my heart shall know not fear,
While at every step I hear,
“ I will never leave thee.”

Now the shadows longer grow,
And the day of life below,
Drawing to a speedy close,
Brings the hour of still repose.
Shall I dread the gloaming ? Nay.
Through the mists I see a ray,
And Christ's voice, not loud, but deep,
Whispers as I fall asleep,
“ I will never leave thee.”

A BLIND MAN'S STORY.

(JOHN ix. 25.)

My life was one long night without a star !
It knew no sunrise, had no opal tints
Flushing the eastern skies, nor any light
Of mid-day glory. I was ever dark,
And had no hope that there was dawn for me.
I did not always know how much I missed,
But sometimes, when a little laughing child,
Sitting awhile within my mother's arms,
I heard strange sadness in her tones of love,
Which made me long to look upon her face,
And see the tears I learned to wipe away.
I played with other children near the mount,
And heard the breezes in the olive-trees,
And smelled the sweetness of the summer flowers,
And dreamed of beauty which I never saw.

I crept away to feel the glad warm sun
In the fair streets of our Jerusalem,
And waited near the Temple, where the sounds
Of rapturous hymns of praise stole on my ears,
And then the tears would come into my eyes
In sorrow for my blindness.

“ Can you see ? ”
I used to ask my mother. “ Are the priests
Pacing with reverent steps the house of God,
And looking from the altar to the skies ?
And do they say that God is very good ?
Then why can I not see as others do ? ”

I pained my mother with these question-words,
And when her sobs alone could answer me,
I grew more silent, waiting till the years
Should teach me.

But the sluggish years passed on,
And did not tell me all I longed to know.
They brought to me new sorrow. All around
I heard the blessed sounds of happy toil.
I knew men laboured and were paid by gain ;
I knew the world was full of tasks prepared
For busy hands ; but I had nought to do :
My hands were idle, for my eyes were blind ;
And I was useless, when I fain would be
A helper of my brethren. So I lived,
Mourning my manhood with its wasted years,
Yet hoping for no change, but in the grave.

I heard men talking as they passed me by
Of One whose name was Jesus. Frequently
They told strange things about Him. He had come,
Some said, to reign as King upon the earth,
And make new laws for nations. Others laughed
In deep contempt and scorn, and spoke of Him
As an impostor, and a Nazarene.
I listened to their speeches curiously,
And sometimes thought if I had not been blind
I would have seen this Jesus for myself !

I sat one day beside the Temple gates,
And heard the noisy stones which strong men hurled,
And knew that Christ had come. Stern things He said
Unto the Scribes and Pharisees ; and they,
Kindling with anger, stirred the crowd to strife.
I heard their cries of rage. " Where is He now ?"
" He has escaped us." " Let us look for Him ;"
And then the tumult died away in peace.

I waited, listening eagerly for more,
And heard the fall of footsteps in the court,
And felt that strangers watched me.

Then one said,
“ He has been blind from birth. Whose sin is it,
His parents' or his own ? ”

And then I heard
A voice that filled my soul with strange sweet awe—
“ Not for his own, nor for his parents' sin,
But that in him the wondrous works of God
Should be made manifest.”

Oh, voice of love !
It drew me nearer to the Speaker's side,
That I might lose no word of all He said.

“ I work the works of Him that sent Me here
While it is day : night comes when none can work.
I am the Light of all the waiting world
That sits in darkness.”

As He spake the words
I lifted up my sightless eyes to Him
In piteous pleading. ‘ Would He understand ?
I felt at once that He could make me see
If He would touch me with His healing hand
Or speak one word of power.

He made me feel
How merciful He was.

He touched my eyes,
And spread clay-ointment on them.

Then He said
“ Go to Siloam, wash thee in the pool.”

Oh ! can I ever tell how glad I was !
It was not yet the dawning, but I knew
The night was nearly over. With quick steps
I passed along, and through the city's gates
In swift obedience. He had sent me there
Who was the Lord of life ; and presently
I should behold the very face of Christ,
And thank Him for His goodness.

Soon I came
Unto the water. With great eagerness
I bathed my eyes in the cool, cleansing wave,
And lo ! I saw !

The water in the sun
Sparkled like silver. Dancing, light-kissed leaves
Turned their bright faces to me. Painted flowers
Came to caress my hands. The birds I knew
By their familiar voices looked at me.
The caves among the rocks opened blank eyes
For me to gaze in. And the blue, blue skies
Seemed to drop blessings on me where I stood
In rapture such as words can never tell.
I looked around, and wondered. But my heart
Craved for the Saviour who had given me light.
And so I left the fountain-music near,
And all the strange new beauties that I saw,
And went to look for Him, but found Him not.
The neighbours came around me. Were they glad ?
I saw no pleasure in their wondering eyes ;
And when I told them Christ had made me see,
They took me to the Pharisees.

I told
My story simply. They with angry words
Denounced the Saviour. Who was He, they cried,
Who did not keep the holy Sabbath-day,
But a great sinner who offended God ?

Others declared He did not sinful works.
Some said, "He is a prophet." No one seemed
Glad in my joy ! but the sweet Sabbath hours
Were filled with clamour.

Then my parents came.
I looked into my mother's frightened eyes,
And saw my father bend his face to me,
And then the people questioned them, and asked
How I the blind was able now to see.
They could not tell them. Then again the Jews
Bewildered me with questions. Who was He ?
What had He done for me that I could see ?
I told them once again, and as I spake
My heart instructed me. He was the Lord,
The great Messiah, come to save us all.
I found no answer to their mocking words,
But knew I had been blind, and now could see,
And a great hope arose within my soul
That they who questioned me would worship Him
And be His true disciples.

But my words
Angered them greatly, and they cast me out
As one too wicked for the synagogue,
And called me His disciple.

Was I that ?
Would He consent that I should follow Him ?
I could not tell. But presently the Lord
Came to me where I was, and spoke to me.
I looked the thanks that filled my bounding heart,
I could not utter them, they were too deep,
But He could read them.

"Hast thou faith in Me ?"
He asked me gently.

“ Who art Thou, O Lord?”
I cried, and all my soul went out to Him,
For now I knew Him as the Son of God,
And worshipped Him with reverence and with joy.

And so He changed my night to cloudless day,
And I was happy ! But 'tis passing strange
That you should still be blind ! Oh, come to Him,
And He your eyes will open, till you see
The full forgiveness in His glorious face,
And His fair city, new Jerusalem !

THE BELOVED OF THE LORD.

“ The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by Him, and the Lord shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between His shoulders.”

“ I WONDER if *I* am the Lord's beloved,”
Said one, in a trembling voice ;
“ My heart cries out for Him evermore,
For He makes the sad rejoice.
I should like to sit at the Master's feet,
He would cover me all day long,
And life would pass like a summer's day,
Spending itself in song.”

“ I wonder if *I* am the Lord's beloved,
But the darkness is in my face,
I do not live in the light of love,
Nor dwell in the Saviour's grace.
The joy of my spirit is gone afar,
The light of my hope is dim,
It is not thus the beloved are,
Who in safety dwell by Him.”

"I wonder if *I* am the Lord's beloved,"
Said one in a wistful tone ;
"Would He leave me thus in the thickest strife,
Facing the fight alone ?
I cannot conquer, my arm is weak,
And I stand in the midst of foes ;
But the Master's presence would quell them all
With a whisper of calm repose."

"Oh, make *me* one of the Lord's beloved,"
'Twas a cry went up to heaven ;
"I have wandered far from my Father's house,
But I long to be forgiven.
Would He take me back in my feebleness,
If I ventured to come to Him,
Though my heart is broken by sore distress,
And my eyes with tears are dim ?"

An answer came to the pleading men,
"Ye are *all* the Lord's beloved,
He cannot look on your sin and woe,
And His heart remain unmoved.
He loves you, cares for you, died for you,
He will not His own forsake ;
You have but to trust Him and come to Him,
And be glad for His mercy's sake."

So the message came to this world of sin,
And whenever its sound was heard,
By a hope that never was born of earth,
The spirits of men were stirred.
The timid, weary, and wandering ones
The grace of the Father proved ;
And each one found, to his heart's content,
That he *was* the Lord's beloved.

IN THE GLOAMING.

“Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness.”—PAUL.

IN the times far back and olden
Came an evening soft and golden,
When a tired head sought its pillow, and a tired heart longed for
rest ;
When the warrior heard no rattle
Of the foemen fierce in battle,
For repose that follows victory had settled on his breast.

Oh, this evening brought such gladness
That the former care and sadness,
The long passage through rough waters that his shrinking eyes
had seen,
The full cup of bitter sorrows,
All the fear of dark to-morrows,
And the anguish of the spirit, were as if they had not been.

For he knew that far behind him
Were the chains that used to bind him,
And the woes that made him feeble in the long, unequal fight ;
And a comrade was beside him,
Strong and tender, who would guide him
Through the shadows of the evening to the land of perfect light.

Now his face to heaven was turning,
And his glad eyes were discerning
The fair city in the distance, where the conqueror should be
crowned,
And he thought how friends departed,
Strong, and faithful, and true-hearted,
Would be near with loving welcome—words to make his joys
abound.

But the best of all the pleasure,
The one rapture without measure,
Would be given to the disciple, when he saw the Master's face ;
And for this his heart was longing,
And he saw the angels thronging
Round the gates of pearl, wide open, of his Father's fair home-
place.

So he waited, uncomplaining,
He a king, though not yet reigning,
And at length he saw a seraph, who in joyful haste came down ;
And in gladness undiminished,
With a life-course fully finished,
He arose, the faithful victor, and received the promised crown.

So may we who read the story
Of the servant's life and glory,
Make his mighty faith, and courage, and fidelity our own ;
And the shadows as they lengthen
In our evening will but strengthen
The sure hope that we shall meet him at the last before the
throne.

STORM PRAYERS.

ONCE, long ago, the skies grew dark, over loved Galilee,
The angry winds blew o'er the waves, and stirred the little sea ;
And a small vessel gliding there, became so tempest-tost,
That the men's hearts grew still with dread, for they thought that
all was lost.

But wearied by His Father's work, the Saviour rested there ;
So tired He was, so deep His sleep, that the thunder in the air
Did not disturb His sweet repose, but He slept amid it all,
And only woke when on His ears broke the disciples' call.

They prayed Him with impassioned words : " Carest Thou not?"
they said.

" We perish in the storm's wild night : lo ! we are sore afraid ;
Lord, save us." And He heard the cry, and bade the wind to
cease,

And on the ruffled sea there stole the blessed calm of peace.

Oh, many times since that far day, the cry has gone to Him
From men bewildered by the storm, whose eyes of faith were dim ;
And many times His love has been their shelter in the blast,
And the wild wind has died away, and the rough storm has passed.

Why should we be afraid to-day ? The storm-clouds gather near,
But those who know the Master's power need never yield to fear ;
He seems to sleep, the tempest breaks, but if His children cry,
He answers them in loving tones, " Be not afraid ; 'tis I."

'Tis sweet to see the April flowers, that bloom in vale and grove,
For they tell us pleasant stories of the Father's tender love ;
But the storms that force the heartfelt prayer that God will not
forget,
And draw peace-blessings down to us, bring deeper gladness yet.

SHORTENING DAYS.

STILL the summer beauty lingers,
Azure skies look down and smile,
Gorgeous flowers blaze forth their brightness,
Merry birds the hours beguile ;
Still the sea is flashing silver,
And the white waves kiss the beach,
And the meadow lands are lovely
Far as searching eyes can reach.

Yet the heart finds something wanting
That it had amid the spring,
Something hopeful, glad, and buoyant,
Which had passed on rapid wing ;
For the year is growing older,
Days of youth have quickly fled,
And the violets and cowslips
Are among the treasures dead.

And the day gets tired so early,
That it cannot labour long ;
Soon the light fades into twilight,
And 'tis time for evensong ;
And the shadows spread and darken,
Till the quiet of the night
Hushes all the earth to slumber,
And to dreams of deep delight.

In the forest there are whispers
Which are felt as well as heard,
When the leaf-hosts on the tree-tops
By the gathering winds are stirred ;
And the whisper is a message—
“Nothing bright on earth can last,
The glad summer time is going,
And will soon be with the past.”

Is it then a mournful warning ?
Nay, for when the heart is sad,
The grave beauty of the autumn
Comforts it, and makes it glad ;
Summer does but hasten onward
The sure joy of harvest days,
When the fields are crowned with plenty
And the land is filled with praise.

And the early evenings promise
To the waiting soul its rest ;
Though the summer has its fadings,
That which looks like death is best ;
And although our days are shortening,
And the spring's bright joy is past,
We are waiting for the country
Where the summers always last.

TWO SUNSETS.

HAVE you seen the day die slowly in its robe of golden light,
While on darkening wings of evening came the solemn hours of
night ?

Have you seen the opal sunset strangely dye the western skies,
And the day sink down in silence as the shining stars arise ?

So I watched it one fair evening in the autumn of the year,
When the ripened corn was carried, and the leaves were growing
sere ;

All the clouds were gold and crimson as they hung about the sun,
But the deep blue skies above me seemed to smile that work was
done.

Faintly stirred the gentle breezes as they moved across the sea,
And my heart was glad and quiet as a soul on earth can be,
For I thought how very sweetly all the storm and noise can cease,
When our God who gives the daylight bids the evening bring us
peace.

But to-day I saw a sunset that has stirred my spirit more
Than has any bright day's fading that I ever saw before ;
For a good man passed to heaven as the sun went slowly down,
And another Christian soldier bent to take the promised crown.

All his life's day passed in tumult ; he was ever in the fight,
For his brave strong heart was eager for the triumph of the right,
And his sword was always ready, and his hand was always swift
To destroy the burden-maker, and the burdens aye to lift.

But he grew a little weary as the eventide drew nigh,
And he turned to smile upon us when he found that he might die,
For he had the worker's longing for his meed of precious rest,
And he knew, though earth was pleasant, yet his Father's house
was best.

Oh, if I could tell the story, all your fears of night would cease !
There was nothing in that chamber but the blessed dawn of peace,
And the golden light that touched him but revealed a shining face
That had caught the glow of heaven ere it saw the lovely place.

So whatever golden sunsets there remain for me to see,
I shall always think of this one in that home beside the sea !
Do you tell me that the closing of a life is like the night ?
Nay, the Christian's hour of dying is the dawn of perfect light.

BARE TREES.

POVERTY-STRICKEN, and gaunt they stand,
Dotted about o'er the hard, brown land.
Stripped of their beauty, they moan and sigh
To the pitiless breeze as it rushes by.
Leafless, forsaken, of song bereft,
They are like a life with no pleasure left.

Beautiful ever, though stripped and bare,
Are the trees that are planted everywhere ;

Winter's best beauty belongs to them,
To their giant trunk and feathery stem,
And they bravely stand in the silent wood,
Like a patient life that is nobly good.

They seem to be hopeful, these stricken trees ;
And to keep in their bosoms glad promises ;
To know that the weeks as they pass will bring
The bursting buds of the genial spring.
So they wait for the time of life and song,
Like a patient heart that through hope is strong.

Well would it be if our human life,
Stripped by trouble and torn by strife,
Shaken by every passing breeze,
Could be calm and true as the naked trees,
Spreading itself to the summer's light,
Yet waiting in hope through the winter's night.

God, whose lessons are everywhere,
Let us see Thy word in the branches bare ;
May we learn to be hopeful when storms are high,
And be still and strong 'neath a wintry sky,
Knowing that even the winds shall bring
The plenteous leaves of the happy spring.

THE WOMAN WHO WAS A SINNER.

I ROSE with the swift sun, and saw the light
Steal lovingly across our Hermon's slopes,
And touch the dewy eyelids of the flowers,
And woo the birds from out their downy nests.

I heard the opening anthems of the dawn,
The low, soft sigh-notes of the tender-trees,
The pleasant trill of Kishon's rippling waves,
And the full anthems of all singing things.

I neither sang nor smiled. I was so sad,
That the great discord in my troubled heart
Disturbed the world's sweet harmony of song ;
And sparkling waters and the dancing leaves
Seemed but to mock the tempest of my grief.
I could not laugh away the merry hours,
I could not rest in luxury and ease,
I scarcely dare lift up my eyes to heaven,
Nor with my soiled fingers touch the flowers,
For I had learned the sinfulness of sin.

I had not always known how black I was,
But Christ had looked at me, and in His eyes
I read the story of my wasted life.
The look had haunted me. I saw it still,
It shone from out the shadows of the night,
And its accusing silence chilled my heart
Amid the busy bustle of the day.
I thought of it that morning as I watched
The strong sun send away the clasping mists
From Tabor's heights, and, thinking, strangely longed
To see it in the face of Christ once more.

I saw it yet again that day. He came
Along the sun-dried road with weary feet
To Nain. I saw Him meet a mourning crowd,
And give the widowed heart her son again.
I heard Him speaking to the friends of John,
And saw His miracles of healing wrought
On many a sufferer. Then I heard Him speak
Grave words of warning. But when these were said,
He lifted up His voice in praiseful prayer,

And, looking on the multitude, His face
Lighted with tenderness the while He spake
As none could speak beside Him, "Come to Me,
And take My yoke upon you, and your souls
Shall have My peace for ever."

As he passed,
I tried to ask Him with my pleading eyes
If His compassion had included me.
But when I sought to look upon His face
My sinfulness rose up and shut Him out.
And yet I could not tear myself away.
I kept Him in my sight, and once, made bold
By the impelling love-tide of my soul,
I bought a box of ointment as a gift,
If I should dare present it. All the day
I followed Him half-fearing, yet I felt
The bliss of hope that blossomed in my breast,
Whene'er He seemed to draw me with His eyes.

But I was not content. I wanted more,
And dared to pray to my offended God
To teach me how to find my way to Christ.
I knew that He could make me white as snow,
I knew that He could fill my aching heart
With plenteousness of love. And I so longed
For peace and pardon that I could but press
Near as I might unto the Holiest's side,
And hope for His forgiveness.

Day wore on,
But every hour was filled with works of love,
And every minute some kind, gentle word
Dropped from the Saviour's lips.

At length He came
To Simon's house. And then my transient hope
Died out in disappointment. 'Twas no place

For sinners such as I. The Pharisee
Would drive me from his presence, and the throng,
Who knew my guilt, pelt me with words and stones
If I should enter. So I tried awhile
To keep outside. And yet I could not stay.
I grew so hungry for the Master's voice,
I thirsted for the sweetness of His smile,
And wearied so for tokens of His grace,
That presently I entered with the rest,
And dared to creep beside Him.

Did He spurn
The lowly sinner craving for His love?
He smiled to see me enter. Did He turn
His sacred face away? He looked at me
In infinite compassion, till my heart
Went out to Him in such deep thankfulness
That but repenting tears and anguished sobs
Could utter what I felt.

He sat at meat,
And I pressed nearer to Him. I forgot
The certain scorn of the unpitying crowd,
And only cared to be where Jesus was,
And only longed to listen to His voice,
And only felt the same roof cover us,—
Him the all-holy, me the most defiled.
I dared not recollect how bold I was;
I could not think of anything but Him;
And as the wondrous moments flew away,
My tears fell faster far.

I cannot tell
What drew me to the very feet of Christ;
But there I found myself. In tenderness
Of love and grief I bent above the feet
So weary with their travels o'er the hills,
So swift to bear the Saviour to the lost,


And washed them with my tears. He did not chide
My eager faith. How shall I dare to tell
The boldness of my love? I bent my face
Towards His sacred feet, and with my hair
I wiped away my tears that fell on them,
And pressed my trembling lips in one long kiss
Upon them. Then I thought upon my gift,
And broke the alabaster box, and poured
The ointment on the feet of Christ my Lord.

My Lord? Yes, mine !

I heard the Master speak
To the unuttered thoughts in Simon's breast.
I pitied Simon. He had slighted Christ,
And had not known my bliss of serving Him,
And Jesus spoke to him of certain debts ;
I scarcely understood the words He said,
Until I heard my name, and then I found
That I had not displeased the gracious King,
But that the expression of my venturous faith
Had given Him joy. Oh ! wonderful it seemed,
That for the very greatness of my love
My great sins were forgiven !

But so it was.
The Master turned to me, and gently spake.
I raised my wistful face to meet His eyes,
And the Redeemer thrilled me with the words,
" Thy sins are pardoned, thou art saved by faith :
Go in My ways of peace for evermore."

The morn was full of turbulence and woe,
The eventide brought utter peace and rest ;
I passed away into my new, glad life,
Pardoned and clean. Henceforth the happy world
Listened to no more rapturous song than mine,
For I had found the Saviour.



Oh ! crushed hearts,
That beat beside me, why not come to Him ?
He loveth me ; He will not say you nay,
Since I, the guilty, dare to call Him mine.
I tell you none who come in faith to Him
Shall pass away unblessed and unforgiven.
He is among us still. He calleth you
Who labour and are heavy-laden. Come,
Oh, come to Him, and He will give you peace.

THE BEAUTY OF THE KING.

“Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty.”

So they told her when the shadows crept about her where she lay,
And the swiftly falling even closed life's little working day,
And her eyes grew bright with pleasure as she saw the wooing
shore
Of the land where sickness comes not and the people weep no
more.

All the time she had been busy she would often stop to sing
Of the majesty, the glory, and the sweetness of the King ;
And no loving hands might hold her, when the Master called her
near
To the sunshine of His presence from the darkness that is
here.

Mourning hearts were pleading for her through the lingering
Sabbath hours—
Was not winter coming quickly? Must she die as died the
flowers?

But their prayers were weak to keep her, for her heart was in the
heaven
Where the King had gone before her, where the white robes should
be given.

Not a tear she shed at parting, for she longed at length to know
All the beauty of the Master which she only guessed below ;
And how gladly did she hasten through the thick November sleet
To the land of perfect brightness, and her home at Jesus' feet.


Now she sees the Face she longed for, and she knows herself
forgiven
All the sin and care and weakness that once kept her from her
heaven ;
She has told Him all the story of her love, and He has spread
Gentle hands of blessing o'er her, and her heart is comforted.

We remain a little longer : very far off is the land
Where the friends we loved are gathered in a joyous perfect band ;
But our solace in our absence is the hymn that we shall sing
When our eyes shall rest for ever on the beauty of the King.

A NEW PATH.

"Ye have not been this way heretofore."

I WAIT at the entrance, peering,
But the way that I needs must go
Is by thickening fog-clouds hidden,
And covered by shrouds of snow.
I see not the signals "Danger,"
Where the ice-crusts are but thin ;
Nor the banks of the turbid water
Whence many have fallen in.



I say, as I look, and wonder,
Will the journey be short or long?
Can the air, that is keen at starting,
Be filled with the summer song?
Does the way that is now snow-covered
Lead on through the woodlands green,
Where the birds shall be making music,
And the smiling flowers be seen?

Shall I tread it with dear companions,
Whom I fondly call my own?
Or shall I be taken from them.
To go on my way alone?
Shall I sing as I march on gladly,
Meeting delight and gain,
Or take as my comrades daily,
Sorrow, and loss, and pain?

I know not, and all my guessing
Cannot the path reveal,
For the gates of the way are fastened,
And sealed with my Father's seal.
Till He shall unlock them for me,
It is not for me to know
What scenes there are softly waiting
In the journey I have to go.

He knows, and I walk with gladness,
Though the skies shall be bright or dim,
I am not afraid of the dangers
In the road that I tread with Him.
I will go where His voice shall bid me,
For His children to Him are dear,
And I know that His love will lead me
Through the paths of each strange new year.

DARK NIGHTS.

YOU say they are swiftly coming,
The nights that are dark and drear ;
I am not afraid of their shadows,
I care not for winter near :
The lights shall burn brightly always,
And my home shall be gay with song,
And glad with the children's faces—
Shall I care though the nights are long ?

You say that the path before me
Leads down into deepest gloom,
Uncheered by the merry skylark,
Or the flowers when they richly bloom ;
But I know I shall find some brightness,
A glimmer of sun or star ;
And so I will go on gladly
To the ways where the dark shades are.

You say that the world is dreary,
But it shall not be so to me ;
I will look for the brightest places
Wherever they chance to be :
And though there must come a winter
I will hope for the future spring,
When the sun shall the darkness scatter,
And flowers o'er the meadows fling.

And the life that is still before me—
Do you think it is like the night ?
I know that the stars are shining,
And the dim way leads to light ;

No mountain shall e'er deter me,
No valley shall make me wait,
I will steadily aye press forward,
Till I stand at the golden gate.

So the nights, when the lamps are lighted,
And the darkness is deep and long,
When the room is filled with the singing
Of the children's joyous song,
Shall be to me like a figure
Of my life in this world of care,
Which shall ever be bright with praises
And quiet with trustful prayer.

For I know that my Father maketh
The night that is still and deep,
Not to sadden His children's spirits,
But to give them His blessed sleep ;
And so I will trust my Father
Till the winter has passed away ;
I shall live in a land of sunlight,
Away from the night, some day.

THE FATHER'S PROMISES.

NEVER thought of care can come,
Throwing shadows o'er my home,
But God's Word lights up the way
With a more than noontide's ray ;
And I read, in letters golden,
Many a promise, strong and olden.

"Fear not. Sparrows never fall,
But your Father knoweth all ;
He who gives them daily food,
Satisfies His own with good."

Never comes an hour of pain,
But, for sorrows that remain,
Comes a healing word to me
Of a land beyond the sea,
Where afflictions, that are grievous,
At the very shore shall leave us,
And we all, by death made strong,
Shall be jubilant with song ;
And I find fresh patience brought
To my spirit by the thought.

When I stand with timid feet
Where the uncertain cross-ways meet,
And in shadows of the night
Cannot guess which road is right ;
When I shrink in hesitation
From new scenes of desolation,
Comes the strengthening word to me,
"Lo, I always am with thee."
And, while songs my lips employ,
I go on my course with joy.

When the duties of the day
Roughly steal my strength away,
And the tasks I have to do
Are not easy, are not few,
Then, to make my courage stronger
And my hope to last the longer,
Comes the Master, with His grace
And the shining of His face,
And I gladly do my best,
Till He sends the hour of rest.

So, whate'er the lot may be
Which the Father sends to me,
Never am I comfortless
With His Word to aid and bless ,
And, while He His help is bringing,
I will cheer the way with singing,
Till, by His unchanging love,
I shall reach His home above,
And, while bending at His feet,
Find the promises complete.

IN THE HUSH.

"He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still : then are they glad because they be quiet : so He bringeth them unto their desired haven."

THE world's wild tumult was about my ears,
And summer songs had changed to wailings deep ;
It seemed that all the sorrows of the years
Stole to my side, and banished rest and sleep ;
And there arose from out the crowded street
The endless clatterings of tongues and feet.

The angry winds stirred up the waves to strife,
And the o'erwhelming waters towered like hills,
And made a picture of the restless life
That cries in anguish for the Voice that stills ;
And in the struggle I myself had part,
For that I saw was also in my heart.


But One came to me, and His step was slow ;
His face was moved with pity for my grief ;
He was my Friend and Helper long ago,
And now His hands were stretched to my relief,
And yet He did but softly whisper "Peace,"
To make the tumult and the discord cease.

The storm sank down in silence instantly,
The rushing waves were hushed to sunny calm,
And from the silvered surface of the sea
There floated to the shore a thankful psalm ;
And I, made glad, filled the clear air with song,
And found the haven I had sought so long.

It seemed of all God's gifts the greatest came
That day when He gave quiet ; for the rush
Passed like a dream, and all things spoke His name,
And waited for His voice in the deep hush ;
And He came near, so near, 'twas almost given
To taste the sweetness of the joy in heaven.

And, in the hush, the Father said to me,
"Child, though the storm distresses, it is well
Amid the strife and tumult thus to be,
And hear and feel the water's rush and swell ;
'Tis not alone the time of light and song,
But of wild winds that makes the trees grow strong.

"And there is need for thee to stand and wait,
While tempests beat, and seas like mountains rise,
To see the world about thee desolate,
Till, in the stress, thy spirit seeks the skies,
And learns that earth, with all its wild unrest,
Is not the home where thou art truly blest."



THE MASTER'S WATCH.

"He saw them toiling in rowing."—ST. MARK.

"He seemed like unto one upon the shore of a stormy sea covered with mists and darkness, who peereth into the night if perchance he may descry the ship wherein his friends sail tempest-tossed; even so did Jesus look forward into that which was to come, for our sakes."—PHILOCHRISTUS.

TOILING in rowing, they were one day,
Though friends of the Master and dearly loved;
Near to His heart indeed were they,
And His tender compassion He often proved;
But the seas where they sailed were not always calm,
With a silver surface and tranquil psalm.

The billows' voices were loud and strong,
The winds shrieked wildly, as mad with flight;
It seemed that death sang a triumph-song
As sure of his prey on that awful night;
And the timid disciples, with courage gone,
Felt forsaken and weak and lone.

And the Master watched them! In solitude,
With none beside Him upon the shore,
In quiet sorrow the Saviour stood,
And looking the foaming waters o'er,
He saw, not only that storm-lashed sea,
But the fiercer tempests yet to be.

He saw His children amid the strife,
Their frantic efforts and hopeless mien,
And, looking out upon human life,
Saw many a gloomier, sadder scene,
And the awful seas through which they come
Who sail in hope to the heavenly home.

Can He deliver? And does He care
For the sinking hearts of the timid men?
Does He hear the hasty, impassioned prayer
Of those scarce able to pray again?
We know from what Jesus did that night
In what deeds of mercy He takes delight.

Still toiling in rowing His scholars were,
With the contrary wind yet wild and strong,
When they saw the face of the Master there,
And heard His voice like a soothing song,
"Be not afraid; be of good cheer."
Could they help it as soon as the Lord was near?

He entered the ship, and the waves were still,
The wind sank down to a whispering breeze,
The morning gladness touched rock and hill,
And the flowers smiled sweetly the King to please,
While the Lord's disciples stepped on shore
With their love increasing more and more.

Did it really happen so long ago?
It all comes over again to-day!
We are out on the ocean of strife and woe,
And our hearts are filled with a sad dismay;
But One is watching upon the shore
As kind and strong as in days of yore.

And He sees again, as He saw that night,
Though winds blow ever, and seas are rough.
He is the Master, and has the right
To save when the grief has been long enough;
And we need not fear, but when storms are nigh,
He will say to us, "Fear not; 'tis I."

THE HOUSE OF GOD.

“Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house : they will be still praising Thee.”

WHERE is Thy house, O Father?
Where the restful pilgrims wait,
Bringing their gifts of gladness
Into the temple gate ;
Where the joy and triumph linger,
And the voice of happy song,
And the lowly prayer and pleading
Ring through the whole day long.

Where is Thy house, O Father?
Where the poor and needy meet,
And see, for their strength and comfort,
The face of the King most sweet ;
Where they hasten to cry Hosanna,
And the children swell the sound,
And reverence, faith, and fealty,
In humble hearts abound.

Where is Thy house, O Father?
Ah ! the echoes reach us yet
Of the ransomed crowds in heaven
Whom we do not here forget ;
In Thy house they are dwelling safely,
And they see Thee day and night,
For, with sin and sorrow over,
They walk with Thee in white.

That is Thy house, our Father,
And the children dwell at home ;
The wanderers have gathered,
And they nevermore shall roam.

Within the walls of sapphire,
Safe from all storm of wrong,
They gladly sing for ever
In the new victorious song.

How should *they* not be praising ?
They could not silent be
Who see the great King's beauty
Beside the crystal sea ;
Who comprehend His patience,
And His faithfulness and love,
Who rest, with the conflict over,
In their Father's house above.

But are these alone Thy dwellings,
O Father of us all ?
There are some who, sick and lonely,
Lie where the shadows fall ;
They cannot join the anthems
Of thine earthly temple choir ;
And they only know Thy heaven
In the dreams of their desire.

And yet we all are blessèd !
In our Father's house we dwell,
Though we stay in humble earth-homes,
Nor yet heaven's rapture tell ;
For we know that He is with us,
We can speak to Him in prayer,
And we will still be praising,
For God's house is everywhere.

THE BLESSING OF NAPHTALI.

"And of Naphtali he said, O Naphtali, satisfied with favour, and full with the blessing of the Lord : possess thou the west and the south."—DEUT. xxxiii. 23.

HE had enough already. A cup filled to the brim
Had the great God of his fathers held lovingly to him :
The morning brought contentment and the evening brought its
wealth,
And the day was bright with pleasure, and his heart with joy and
health.

So satisfied with favour, what more could he desire ?
Yet the fulness of God's blessing would raise his triumph higher ;
He was the Lord's belovèd, no foe could do him wrong,
And his life passed like the sweetness of a glad thanksgiving song.

But the Father's love of giving was not yet satisfied ;
For Naphtali earth-treasures had been scattered far and wide,
And he must go and gather, and he must fight and win,
And God would make him prosper if he would enter in.

O fearful heart, take courage, for the King would have you know
Of a happy secret hidden in these words of long ago :
Because you have the blessing, do you think that all is given,
And your gifts of love have emptied the great treasury of heaven ?

You look for rain to-morrow since the sun has shone to-day ;
Because some flowers are gathered, will no others light your way ?
If satisfied with favour, is there no more love in store ?
Oh, know that God has promised he who hath shall have still more

He has an Indian summer, though the first fair roses die ;
And golden stars unnumbered, though some bright ones deck
the sky :

And tender hearts to love you, and fair faces not yet seen,
And some blessings that are greater than His greatest yet have
been.

Then hope in Him for ever, and go gladly to the south,
And let the true heart-praises for His goodness fill your mouth ;
Then trustingly go forward to the gloaming in the west,
For the last and best of blessings is His benison of rest.

GOD'S GIFT.

“The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord's: but the earth hath He
given to the children of men.”—PSALM cxv. 16.

It is fair in morning light,
It is beautiful at night ;
It is gay with summer flowers,
It is white in winter hours ;
It has grave, grand mountain glooms,
It has meadows bright with blooms,
Azure skies and fields of green,
Purple hills and vales between ;
Such the gift of God to men,
Do they ever
Render back the gift again,
And thank the Giver ?

It is vocal with sweet sounds,
Music everywhere abounds ;
Multitudes of happy birds,
Warble their mysterious words ;

Wild winds sing low litanies,
Breezes play sweet symphonies ;
And the waves in monotones
Sigh their secrets to the stones ;
All things speak the Father's love.

Do men ever
Let their voices rise above,
And praise the Giver ?

It has rivers fringed with flowers,
It has evergreen, cool bowers ;
It has nooks of moss and fern,
It has many a gushing burn ;
It has open, breathing spaces,
It has "quiet resting places ;"
Bright banks where the violets grow,
Deep glens where the waters flow,—
Such the world that God has given.

Do men ever
Strive to make it like His heaven,
And thank the Giver ?

Sadly do they spoil its beauty
By their lack of love and duty.
Lo ! some fields in blood are dyed,
And men's hearts in hate and pride
Live to torture one another,
Seeing not the friend and brother
Of the Father's family.
Some are slaves that should be free ;
Some choose darkness and not light ;
And they never
See God's will and do the right,
Or bless the Giver.

Some make discords evermore,
Where sweet music reigned before ;

And the world is filled with noises
Of loud cursings by harsh voices,
With sad women's heart-wrung sighs,
And the children's piteous cries.
So earth's wanderers by throngs
Give to God no thankful songs,
Take His gifts of joy and good ;
 Yet they never
Let these make them glad or good,
 Nor thank the Giver.

So it is ! And yet there be
Multitudes which thankfully
See His works by sea and shore,
And the Father-hand adore ;
And their voices are not still,
But from valley and from hill,
From full home, and crowded street,
Wheresoe'er the people meet,
Rise the songs God's children sing,
 Tiring never,
Till the worlds with praises ring
 Of Him the Giver.

A STORY OF THE SEA.

'Twas a time of strife and tumult,
All the winds went out that night,
And they lashed the shuddering waters
Till they rose in maddened might,

Seething, hissing, sighing, roaring,
As in war with deadliest foes,
The vexed billows raged in fury
Till the sullen morning rose.

There were cries, "Bring out the life-boat,
For a ship is in distress.
Hark ! the minute-gun is booming,
Through the mist towards the Ness.
Though the winds are strong and mighty,
We will brave the storm again,
Forth go we to fight the billows,
And God speed the life-boat men."

"Ready !" "Ready !" came the answers ;
And with faces sternly set,
As in resolute endurance,
Which had never failed them yet,
Went the brave, true men together,
Strong to help and glad to save ;
And they had not hearts of cowards
Who thus dared to face that wave.

Soon they launched the life-boat safely,
And they toiled for very life,
Out upon the awful waters,
In the midst of death-like strife ;
"Shall we ever do it ?" cried they,
In strange voices full of pain ;
But the others answered boldly,
"Are we not the life-boat men ?"

Toiling, rowing, almost fainting,
They have reached the vessel's side,
And a cry of joy goes heavenward,
They are saved who must have died


Had not brave men come to save them
Now, "Oh, keep her still afloat
While the men and boys are lowered,
One by one into the boat."

But one man, afraid to venture,
Hesitates, and counts the cost ;
"Oh, make haste !" they cry beseeching,
"Hasten, or we all are lost."
Still the man starts back in horror,
And the sailors shout once more,
"Are you coming ?" yet he lingers—
And the boat makes for the shore.

Springing o'er the hills of waters,
Nobly rides the life-boat on,
But the men are scarcely thinking
Of the dozen lives well-won ;
They are mourning for that other—
Can they leave him there to die ?
Ah ! to that endangered vessel
Turns in sorrow many an eye.

On the shore the people waiting
Send the men a hearty cheer ;
"God be thanked !" they tell each other,
"The good boat is drawing near."
Eager hands are stretched to help them,
Tearful eyes their faces see,
And the neighbours say together,
"Ah, how brave our men can be."

But the boatmen tell their story,
And their faces all grow grave.
"One man left alone to perish !
Surely not while we can save."



But the men are tired and strengthless,
And they dare not face again,
All unaided, the fierce dangers
Of the angry, awful main.

“ I will go.” One strong and fearless
Steps from the excited crowd ;
But a woman, clinging to him,
Prays him in tones deep, not loud,
“ Do not go for love of heaven ! ”
But he turns, and quietly
Says, “ It is for heaven, my darling,
That I brave the angry sea.”

Then they go. Ah, heaven is nearer
So perchance. The treacherous wave
Has no mercy. They are buried
There within the deep sea grave.
But they wear the crown of glory,
They had learnt the Saviour's love,
For they died in helping others,
And they see His face above.

THE BLIND GIRL'S SONG.

SHE lifted her mild eyes that were dark with shades of night ;
A smile was on her lips, and her face grew strangely bright :
It seemed as if she saw as we could not Christ the King,
And we felt Him drawing near as we gladly heard her sing,
This the song that trembled forth, while our eyes with tears were
dim,
“ Oh, rest ye in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him.”

We all had need to learn that sweet lesson of content,
Though we were in gleeful mood, and on festive joys intent,
For some danger lurking near, some sorrow half-concealed,
Some softly stifled sigh, our unrest or grief revealed ;
But the blind girl's song was sweet, and might well our hope
inspire—

“ Oh, rest, and He will give to thee thy heart's desire.”

Was she singing to herself? Ah, to face that darkened life
Must have cost her bitter tears, some self-battles and wild strife.
Did she count the victory won? Had the Healer cured the
pain?

But there were some signs of grief that must evermore remain,
Yet her heart had found repose, and her joy-draught touched
the brim,

For she rested in the Lord, waiting patiently for Him.

Our faith grew clear and strong as we heard the singer's voice ;
Though days be dark and drear we may in God rejoice.
His sorrows come in love ; His mercy makes us glad,
And even in grief's night we are not wholly sad ;
We will raise the blind girl's song whene'er our life is dim,
“ Oh, rest in the Lord ; wait patiently for Him.”

God sanctify the song and the gentle singer bless,
Give her light amid the dark, and good meed of happiness.
May she aye have cause for joy till she joins the blissful band
Of the harpers with their harps in the sunny summer land ;
When she still will rest in Him, but need not wait patiently,
For the Christ is ever near, and *all* eyes His beauty see.

We thank Him that meanwhile we have heard her trustful song,
For our hearts were sad and lone, and the night was over long ;
But this God-speed gives us strength, we will sing along the
way,

Till the shadows shall give place to a bright, unending day,
And the tender, sweet refrain shall be heard in moments dim,
“ Oh, rest in the Lord ; wait patiently for Him.”

FAIRUS.

THE daylight faded from the purple hills,
 And the black herald-shadows of the night
 Crept through the synagogue. Then I arose,
 For I was weary of the toil of day,
 And longed for home and brightness. I had been
 With the grave rulers seeking for the right
 In a disputed case, until my head
 Grew pained and dizzy, and my heart was sad.
 But when the night had come we came away,
 And whispered the peace-blessing unto each ;
 Then turned our steps to where the lamps were lit
 In our bright, happy homes. I longed for mine,
 For I had left within it my one pearl,
 Dearer to me than wealth, or fame, or life—
 My only daughter. As I paced the street
 I thought how eagerly she watched for me,
 And how with sparkling eyes, and smile-wreathed lips,
 And cheeks that glowed with pleasure, she would haste
 To bid me welcome. Even as I walked
 I longed to feel the pressure of her arms
 And her pure kisses on my dusky cheek ;
 And so I hastened on.

She was not there !
 She did not come to greet me at the door ;
 I did not hear her merry voice in song ;
 I could not find the light of her dear eyes,
 And all the house was darkened. Where was she ?
 A nameless terror crept into my heart,
 An icy coldness made my limbs to shake.
 And then I sought her chamber. One swift glance
 Into the mother's face and toward the bed

Revealed the dreadful secret. In the day
The fell foe Pain had come and laid his hand
Upon my darling. She was smitten down
By the harsh stroke, and lay in helplessness,
Distressed and suffering !

“ Is she so sick ?
But she will know her father. Dearest, see,
I have some jewels for you ; presently
You shall arise, and bind them in your hair.
Speak to me, my beloved, one little word,
And I will bless you.” But a glassy stare
Was all my answer. Then I turned away
In fierce rebuke. “ Oh ! why have you not sent
For the physician ? If he come not soon,
The child may die.” “ He has been here since noon,”
The mother made reply ; and her changed voice
Told me her heart was breaking.

All that night
We watched together, and the dreary hours
Were long as days ; for as they wore away
The cold death-dew stood on our daughter’s brow,
The little strength she had was overcome,
And the grey shadow touched her mouth and eyes
With dread significance.

Then suddenly
I thought upon the Christ. “ If He would come
And only touch her, she might be made whole.”
I spake the word aloud, and as I spake
My faith grew stronger. “ I will go and see.
She can but die ; but if men tell the truth,
Jesus will come and heal her.” “ Is it so ? ”
The mother cried. “ Oh, hasten thou to Him,
And if He bring our daughter back to life,
I never more will close my heart to Him.”

The crimson sunrise flooded the still street
When I went forth upon my eager search.
I could not find the Saviour. Time was lost,
And time was precious. Earnestly I prayed
I might not be too late, and ere hope died
From my weak heart, the crowds were all about,
And busy day began. "It is too late!"
Fear said to Faith. But Faith replied,
"Be strong and wait." At last one said to me,
"Jesus is taking meat in Levi's house."
I waited not to hear their bitter words,
But hastened to the Master, and fell down
And worshipped at His feet. "O Lord," I cried,
"My little daughter lieth at the point
Of death. I pray Thee lay Thy hands on her
That so she may be healed, and she shall live."
And Jesus rose and followed me at once.
I felt as if my feet must run along
The homeward way. Had I not brought the Lord?
But as we went a mighty surging crowd
Encompassed Him about, and in the throng
A trembling woman came and touched the hem
Of the Redeemer's garment. As I looked,
Her face grew radiant with a thankful joy,
And I should have been glad but that I thought
Of my poor darling. "He will be too late!"
Dirge-like the words kept ringing in my mind,
And I would fain have grasped His sacred hand
And hastened Him with me.

It was too late!
For while He spake the words, "Go thou in peace,"
And filled the woman's heart with grateful joy,
My hope died out in darkness. She was dead,
My own, my only one, and life henceforth
Would be but desolation. Little need
Had I to hear the news my servant brought:
I saw the trembling lip, the tearful eye,

That told me all before he said to me,
"Why troublest thou the Master any more?
Thy daughter now is dead!" I too had died
For very grief of soul; but Jesus heard,
And stilled my sorrow with His blessed words,
"Fear not; only believe, and she shall be
Made whole."

He sent away the hind'ring crowd,
And with the three disciples hastened on
Until we gained my home. Then on my ears
Burst the loud wailing of the weeping friends
And mourning minstrels, and my sinking heart
Turned from the mother's sobs. But Christ was there,
And how could death and sorrow brave His eyes?
"Why make ye this ado, and weep?" said He.
"The damsel is not dead; she does but sleep."
And then with stinging scorn and unbelief
The mourners laughed at Him; for she was dead.

With grave, rebukeful eyes He sent them forth,
And said to me and to the mother, "Come
To where the maid is lying." So we went
Into the awful room, and stood around
The snowy bed on which our daughter lay.
I could not look upon her, yet I saw
The blue-veiled eyes, the unresponding mouth,
The rigid, death-bound limbs. How still she lay!
How strangely hushed we were! We scarcely breathed.
Only the mother lifted up her eyes
In awe and wonder to the face of Christ.

Then, in the aching stillness of the room,
The Master stooped and took the dead, white hand
Within His own. "Maiden, I say to thee
Arise," He gently said. And at His word
The faint rose colour touched the marble cheek,
The eyelids were unsealed, and the parched lips

Parted to smile thanksgiving to the Lord.
Oh, could it be? Was it some happy dream
Come to us in the visions of the night?
Would it not pass and leave us empty still?
Nay! while the frightened blood forsook our face,
And we were dazed with brilliancy of joy,
She walked towards us.

Then, indeed, we knew
How good the Lord had been, and shed such tears
As we shall surely weep in His fair heaven
For its exceeding bliss, ere He shall come
And wipe them all away.

We looked our thanks
From eyes half-blind with love. But Jesus smiled,
And calmed our spirits into quietness.
"The child is hungry; give her food," He said,
And then He left our darling in our arms,
And took His way among the waiting crowd.

Ah! men may call Him Nazarene, and laugh
His holy words to scorn. We know Him now:
He is the one Messiah sent from God,
The only Saviour of the dying world;
He is the Resurrection and the Life,
And *He shall one day waken all the dead.*

THE CAPTIVITY OF ISRAEL.

“ If ye will hearken, ye shall be at peace ; ”
So said the Father. “ I have loved you long,
And yet ye will not make your sins to cease,
Nor come to Me with gifts or loving song.
Ye chose your way, and it will bring you where
No pity bends to your impassioned prayer.”

And then the prophets came. They spake with tears
Of all the evils that would surely fall
After the gross idolatry of years,
While Satan kept the unfaithful hearts in thrall,
Unless the people turned them to His feet,
With signs of earnest penitence most meet.

Their ears were deaf ; they would not heed the word.
Their hearts were hard ; they were not moved by love.
They did rebel ; and, turning from their Lord,
They sold for naught their heritage above ;
They worshipped other gods, and sought to live
Without the blessings God alone could give.

And so He made them lose the land they had,
Their cities were destroyed, and they were sent
As exiles where no temple made them glad,
And joy came not to cheer their banishment.
A stranger among strangers, where, with tears,
They might lament the sins of their past years.

Oh, Thou who knowest all Thy children do,
We pray Thee keep *us* faithful unto Thee !
Help us Thy law to love, Thy will pursue,
Until, at last, Thy glorious face we see.
Be Thou our Friend and Father evermore,
Until the wish and power to sin are o'er.

THE INDIAN FAMINE.

A CRY comes over the scorching plains,
An echoed cry of the anguished pains
Of men and brothers, who, smitten sore
By the pangs of hunger, can bear no more,
But, lying prone by the hot roadside,
Die with each morning and evening tide.

There are mothers who hold to their failing breast
The babes whose wailings at last have rest ;
There are little children, who fainting fall,
With scarcely strength on their God to call ;
There are vigorous men, who have tried to fight,
But perish before the famine's might.

The fields are barren, there is no store
Of the rice that befriended them heretofore ;
The fierce sun shone on the burning plain ;
And no help came at the cry for rain ;
So the huts are empty, the homes are bare,
And the shrieks of agony rend the air.

But in happy England the harvest song
From the yellow stubble is borne along ;
The merry reapers at early morn
Begin to gather the golden corn,
And the food-wealth richly the storehouse fills,
For it grew on the watered English hills.

Shall we keep our plenty while they still want ?
Shall we hear them cry and no succour grant ?

Shall we heap up wealth in our selfishness,
Nor our Indian brothers help to bless ?
God teach us better and make us glad
To feed the hungry and cheer the sad.

They have made us rich with their wealth before,
And they shall be sharers in all our store ;
Gold shall go to them over the waves,
And the love and healing that always saves,
And they shall know that He counts us one
Who is Father of all, and whose will is done.

THE CLOSE OF A LETTER.

(2 TIMOTHY iv.)

THE pen is resting in the writer's hand,
The task is almost done, the conflict o'er ;
The aged head is bent in plaintive thought,
And the strong heart is filled with longing love.
If he could see the face of his dear "son"
Once more before he dies ! And as he thinks
Of the brave courage in the young man's soul,
And the swift feet and hands that joy to work
Of him whom he has trained, his heart is glad,
And he will rouse himself, and write for him
His words of counsel. With a prayer to God
That He would shut away the memory
Of Nero's cruel face, and the sharp gleam
Of that fell axe which soon shall flash for him.
The aged Paul bends o'er the parchment scroll,
And finishes his letter.

“Therefore, know,
 I charge thee before God and Christ the Judge,
 Do faithfully thy work. Go, preach the Word ;
 Be instant, and reprove, rebuke, exhort
 With doctrine and long-suffering. The time
 Will come when they shall heap up teachers false,
 But be thou watchful and enduring still.
 Behold me, I am ready, and the time
 Of my departure is at hand. The fight
 Is good that I have fought ; the faith is kept ;
 My course is finished, and henceforth for me
 There is a crown of righteousness which Christ
 Shall give me at that day ; nor me alone,
 But also thou, and even all who love
 And watch for His appearing.

“Timothy,
 Be diligent, and shortly come to me,
 For I am lonely. Demas loved the world
 And has forsaken me, and only Luke
 Remains. I left my cloak in summer-time
 At Troas, bring it with thee and the books.
 The cell is cold, and I have need of light.
 Oh, come to me. No man stood by my side
 When I was taken by the soldiery
 To Nero ; notwithstanding He for whom
 I live and die stood near and strengthened me,
 And from the lion's mouth He kept my soul,
 So He shall keep me from all evil work,
 And bring me to His heavenly kingdom soon.
 Now unto Him be glory evermore.
 Amen.”

And is the letter finished quite ?
 A postscript must be added : Loving words
 To Prisca, and Aquila, and the rest.
 And then once more the plea, “ Be diligent

And come before the winter. And the Lord
Jesus, the Christ, be with thee evermore.
Amen."

The noble life-work of the man
Is finished now. The pen is laid aside,
The words are written. There shall be for him
A few preliminary hours of rest,
And then the fatal stroke ! And he will find
That to depart and be with Christ the Lord
Is indeed better.

ROUND THE FIRE.

LITTLE ones, come nearer yet,
Fogs and frost and snow forget ;
Do not heed the wintry wind,
Draw the curtains, drop the blind.
Come and hear a merry tale,
How King Love did once prevail
Over might and hate and wrong.
After, join us in our song ;
For we all are gay to-night,
And the fire is warm and bright.

Fathers, mothers, lay aside
Work and worry, scatter wide
Sombre thoughts of harder times,
Listen to the Christmas chimes,
Steal an hour for glad repose,
Warm your faces, toast your toes ;
Let hope come and kiss your eyes,
Let Faith's teachings make you wise,
Like our winter fire be bright,
And trust God for all to-night.

To the warmest corner, there,
Come, dear people, with white hair,
Mother-eyes made dim by tears,
Father-faces seamed by years.
Ah ! your thoughts will wander back
O'er the past's well-beaten track ;
But we hear your voices say,
" God has led us all the way,
And has made the pathway bright
As the fire that burns to-night."

All come closer to the fire !
What can thankful hearts desire
Of the Father-God above,
More than warmth and light and love ?
True, we cannot all be here,
For we miss some faces dear ;
But nor time nor space can part
Friends of leal and faithful heart,
And we pray for them to-night,
In our firelight warm and bright.

Red lips smile and faces glow,
Of the cold we little know ;
But we think of some outside,
Who by no warm fires may hide,
And in pity haste to take
Aid to them for Jesus' sake.
He has left the poor that we
May their friends and helpers be ;
Let us light for them to-night
Fires to warm them, big and bright.

One stands waiting at the door,
We have seen *His* face before,
Strong and tender, sad and sweet.
Who will rise the Lord to greet ?
Who will say, with strong desire,
From this rest-place by the fire :

“ Jesus, come, with us abide,
Tarry with us, not outside,
For all homes and hearts are bright,
When Thou stayest through the night.”


THE LOSS OF THE EURYDICE.

THERE was a sudden squall, and to our gaze
The white snow-flakes looked like a swarm of bees
In violent battle. “ This is like March days,”
We said ; for soon the brilliant sunset glow
Lighted the hills and sparkled on the snow.

And then the prayer-inviting chimes rang out,
And soon it was the time of evensong ;
And thankful people, without fear or doubt,
Went down the slopes, and passed the streets along,
And turned their faces from the smiling sea,
To wonder what for them God’s word should be.

They thought not much of a red flag displayed
Upon an anchored schooner. Well they knew
The men who saw the summons undismayed
Would render help ; for they—the lifeboat crew—
Went forth to duty. Then a whisper sped,—
“ ’Tis but a doctor called or sailor dead.”

And so unto the houses reared for praise
The people went their way. And in one place
They sang good songs well suited for March days :
“ God is our Shepherd,” “ We shall see His face,”
And “ Wash me clean till I am white as snow,”
Then of the heavenly city’s golden glow.



And when amid the hush the text was heard,
 'Twas "*Be ye also ready!*" Little guessed
The preacher as he spake that solemn word
 How it should be on hearts and souls impressed ;
Nor what a fearful illustration lay
Within the sea a few short miles away.

But as he warned, encouraged, and besought
 All men to trust in Jesus, and prepare
For that great change which is by dying wrought,
 Oh ! surely many an earnest, silent prayer
Went up to God, "Oh, make us meet for heaven,
And ready for the call when it is given."

The closing hymn was sung ; and then the street
 Was filled with people. Next a cry was heard
That made them scarcely heed the wind and sleet
 For the great horror of that awful word :
"Only a little way from off the town,
Near to Dunnose, a frigate has gone down !"

What need to tell again the fearful tale ?
 More than three hundred men sank to their graves
During the maddened might of that short gale,
 And fell asleep 'neath scarce disturbèd waves.
Short time had they to utter one short prayer,
Or cling to Christ the Rock in their despair.

But surely where the saddening tale is read
 In happy England, men will hear again
The words of Jesus. Not to move our dread,
 But quicken us to trust and hope in pain,
They reach our ears. Oh ! heed the patient Friend,
And "*Be ye also ready*" for the end.

WINTER-WORK.

“The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace.”

WHAT can I do in this world of gloom ?
I looked at the dying leaves,
With their faces turned to the soddened ground
As they fell 'neath the cottage eaves ;
I saw the dreary November rain,
And I thought of the days to be,
With the bird-notes hushed, and the sunshine gone
From mountain and field and tree.

I mused on the desolate, toil-worn town,
And the thousands of weary men
Who sighed as they thought of the sunless clouds,
And that winter had come again.
I looked at the children so early sad
With sorrow and sin and thrall ;
And I asked, Is there aught that a heart can do
To comfort and bless them all ?

I found the answer where light is seen,
No matter though clouds are grey ;
For the lamp of God, in a dreary place,
Will show us the outward way.
It told me of fruit that my life might bear
For the Master who died for me,
And gave to me work for my hands to do
In the winter that soon shall be.

No seraph mission is mine to-day,
I need not the warrior's might,
Nor the gifts of genius to make me great,
For my tasks are but small and light.

I have but to love in this world of gloom,
And be happy through every day,
And take with me always the angel Peace,
As I walk through the fog-filled way.

So I gladly enter the winter months,
And my heart shall be always warm ;
I will live in the light of unclouded love
However may rage the storm ;
With a joyous song I will face the world,
For I know that its wrath will cease
When the Lord whom I serve to His own will come,
Bringing His gift of peace.

And though it is little that I can do,
I will faithfully do my best ;
Perhaps a glimmer of light may come
From my life to make others blest.
And if the Master but smile on me,
I care not that days are dim ;
I will try to please Him the winter through,
Finding my joy in Him.

CHRISTMAS CAROLS.

CLEARLY through the frosty air
Rang the singers' songs at night ;
They were like a chanted prayer
Unto some who sang with might ;
For the times were hard that year,
Little work had willing hands,
And the hearts were cold and drear,
Though they furnished singing bands.

Yet more sweetly sang they never
Than that night ; with glad endeavour,
Though the tears were in their voices,
Sang they news that aye rejoices—

“ Hark ! the herald angels sing,
Glory to the new-born King.”

One was there, whose hair was grey,
And his hands were hard with toil,
He had laboured many a day
At the tilling of the soil ;
Sixty years of work were passed,
And he sadly bowed his head
As he found himself at last
Singing for his Christmas bread ;
But his heart grew strong with pleasure
As he joined the sacred measure,
Telling o'er the old, old story
Of the Saviour's birth and glory—

“ Peace on earth and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled.”

By his side one young and fair !
To this girl with eyes of blue,
Waiting in the wintry air,
Hope kept brighter things in view.
Might not peace and plenty smile
On her narrow sphere of life ?
Then, with courage, for awhile
She would bear the want and strife.
So she laughed amid the singing
As she heard the joy-bells ringing,
With the Bethlehem babe were given
Hope and happiness and heaven—

“ Mild He lays His glory by,
Born that man no more may die.”

So their voices mingled sweet,
And the cheery chorus rang
In the clear air of the street,
Till the song the singers sang
Stole within the darkened homes,
And the hearts, by sin made sad,
Knew that Christ the Pardoner comes
Making all the people glad.
Men and children knelt confessing
Many faults, but heartfelt love,
And they felt the Christmas blessing,
While the song came from above—
 “Hail ! the heaven-born Prince of Peace ;
 Hail ! the Son of Righteousness.”

“Joyful, all ye nations, rise,
Join the triumph of the skies.”
As the words stole through the door,
Hearts were softened toward the poor,
Plenty met the people's need,
Anger died, and love uprose,
Eager hands stretched out to feed
Neighbours, strangers, even foes.
Merry Christmas had the singers,
Children, old folk, and the ringers ;
Thoughts of Christ brought joy for sadness,
And great hosts sang out in gladness—
 “Join the angels while they sing
 Glory, glory to our King.”

FROM BETHLEHEM.


AS in olden days the angel came to shepherds in the night,
Broke the silence with his singing, filled the darkened heavens
with light,
So he comes this Christmas morning with a message to the earth,
And he tells the glad, old story of the Saviour's wondrous birth.

We who watch can see no flashing o'er the changeful midnight
skies,
We can hear no angel-herald, and we see no star arise ;
But we hear our church-bells pealing, and we know that Christ
was born
For our sakes in Bethlehem's city on the far-off Christmas morn.

Where the heavenly host adoring lighted up those skies at night,
Where the lowly shepherds working saw them with a strange
delight,
'Tis not ours to watch and labour ; but we know that every place
Can be lighted with the glory of the Saviour's loving face.

And we gladly take the message from the fields of Bethlehem ;
He has come, the Christ, the Saviour, unto us as unto them ;
And we join the thankful singers in the anthems that they sing,
"Glory unto God the highest, peace on earth through Christ the
King."

Naught have we to bring unto Him, myrrh nor frankincense nor
gold,
But we bend before our Master with a love that grows not cold ;
And we cling more closely to Him as we think of all His love
Since He came to heal and bless us from the land of light above.



This shall be our Christmas greeting : Jesus, whom the world
despised,
Jesus, Saviour, dearest to us, fondest loved, most highly prized,
Come again to dwell among us, come to reign where men are sad ;
Hope of Israel, to souls waiting, come once more and make us glad.

CHRISTMAS THOUGHTS.

WHAT a glad tumult of laughter and singing !
Voices are merry and smiles wreath the faces !
From the old churches the blithe bells are ringing,
And holly and mistletoe brighten all places.

What does it mean ? Once again, kind, if hoary,
Comes the old friend whom we always must love,
And he tells while we listen the wonderful story
Of how the King came to our earth from above.

“ He was a child, He knew sorrow, was lonely,
Bethlehem’s manger His first cradle bed ;
He was received by poor fishermen only,
Often He had not a place for His head.

“ Yet He stayed on, the crowd’s sicknesses healing,
Feeding the hungry and cheering the sad ;
Always the heart of the Father revealing,
Making the sorrowful hopeful and glad.

“ And He died on the cross that to you might be given
The joy and the victory after His pain ;
Then the rest, and the crown, in the kingdom of heaven ”—
Such the story that Christmas is telling again.

And as he thus sings, parted hands steal together,
There is a warming of hearts that were cold ;
Merry lips laugh once more at the dark, wintry weather,
And friendship and love are renewed as of old.

Hatred and anger, of envy begotten,
Die when the Christmas bells ring through the air ;
Failings and injuries are all forgotten
As soon as the heart has been softened by prayer.

Blessing upon him ! Dispersing men's sadness
Comes he, desiring all discords to cease ;
Such is old Christmas, a bringer of gladness,
A teacher of love and of goodwill and peace.

Make room by the fireside, and give him your greetings,
The old man will smile at the children's free play ;
But do not forget, 'mid the happy home meetings,
The Saviour who gave us the blithe Christmas-day.

THE DYING YEAR.

OLD year, you are faint. I can hear you sighing
Out in the cold where the bare trees bend.
The close has come ; I can see you dying ;
I will grasp your hand to the last, old friend.

We have had both pleasure and grief together,
You have seen my tears and have heard my song,
We have walked in cold and in sunny weather,
And I have been glad of your help so long.

So long? It was only in times of sorrow
The days passed slowly. To me it seems
You came but yesterday, leave to-morrow,
Flashing away like the sun's swift beams.

But you taught some things that were worth the learning.
I hide your secrets within my heart,
And thank you for them. At last discerning
The fainter lines, I have conned my part.

Your voice of courage has made me bolder,
Your hand upon me has made me weak ;
After your stay I am growing older
And nearer yet to the goal I seek.

And yet I am glad to have known you, truly,
Although you have wrathfully torn away
Some things that I clung to, and shown me duly
My sin or failure with every day.

You have brought more often the Father's blessing,
And whispered peace to my troubled soul,
And seen me hopefully, closely pressing
To Him who only can make me whole.

And now—oh friend, you can scarcely hear me !
You can do nothing but faint and die !
A form that is youthful and fair draws near me,
And bells are ringing, Old year, good-bye !

May God forgive me all faults, vows broken,
Fresh sins committed, wrath, hate, and fear,
And give to me as His pardon-token
The first bright days of a better year.

THE NEW YEAR.

FATHER, who givest us
Now the new year,
Grant that Thy mercy
May with it appear ;
Lead us the path along
Which we must go ;
Choose Thou our portion
Of pleasure or woe.

Father, Thy blessing give
Brightening each day ;
Be Thou our comforter,
Hear when we pray.
Let us not go alone
Out in the wild ;
Let Thy forgiving love
Shelter each child.

Whate'er our work shall be
Let us have light ;
What our hands find to do
Doing with might ;
Faithfully serving Thee
While it is day,
So be the happy year
Passing away.

Father, Thy wisdom give,
Let us be strong ;
Keep us from grieving Thee
Doing the wrong.

Oh, let us hear Thy voice
Calling us near,
Oh, let us see the way
Clearly appear.

Father, we cannot see
What is before,
Yet we would sing our song
Trusting Thee more ;
Burdens we have and griefs
Bitter to bear,
But Thou wilt quiet us,
Thou who dost care.

So we will meet the months
Leaning on Thee,
Loving and mighty One,
Still near us be ;
Help us to forward go
Strong in Thy fear ;
Father, abide with us
All through the year.

If it should be the last,
Happy are we !
We in the heavenly home
With Thee shall be.
Guide our feet thither, and
Bless Thou us still—
Father, with us and ours
Do Thine own will.

WAITING FOR THE SUMMONS.

I KNOW an aged pilgrim, worn and weary,
Whose feet still linger on the sands of time ;
But earth, for him, is all too cold and dreary,
He longs to reach a sunnier, happier clime.

His eye is dim ; his ear is dull of hearing ;
Old sights and sounds disturb his soul no more ;
He sees the goodly hills their crests uprearing,—
The sunlit hills upon the farther shore.

In his long journey o'er the desert ranges,
His soul has known sharp conflicts by the way,—
The fierce temptations and the bitter changes,
The chills of night, the burning heats of day.

But now he sits in patience by the river,
Gentle and quiet as a wearied child,
Waiting for God the summons to deliver,
To call him up to mansions undefiled.

Ask him of human life, its plots and scheming,
Its small ambitions and its empty joys,
He answers like a sleeper waked from dreaming,—
He lives afar from all this strife and noise.

But ask of heaven, and of the joys that cluster
Around that land where his Redeemer lives,
His fading eye lights up with saintly lustre,
And his quick tongue the ready answer gives.

THE FISHER-LADS' HOLIDAY.

It was Christmas-day in the morning,
And the heart of each fisher-lad,
Out on the heaving ocean,
With a thought of the day was glad.
Though he heard not the joy-bells ringing
Through the streets and the lanes at home,
No boy in the little vessel
But rejoiced that the day had come.

“ We all will be merry together,
Having our Christmas fare ;
But we think of the Babe in the manger,
Nor forget to bring Him our prayer.”
Hearing these words from the skipper
The lads for awhile were grave,
And they sang, in their gay, rough fashion,
Of Christ and His power to save.

Then they went to the little cabin,
To do in their holiday
What each might desire, write a letter,
Or join in a game of play,
And little they cared for the storm-wind
That blew in that northern sea,
For the hearts of the merry fishers
Were as light as hearts could be.

But the sound of a gun aroused them ;
“ I see a smack in distress,
Now lads,” said the mate, “ get ready,
Be sure we can do no less


Than hasten away to succour
These men that in peril lie,
For how could we keep our Christmas
If we left them there to die?"

Then the play was all forgotten,
And into the little boat
Sprang the fisher-lads together,—
"If only we keep afloat
We will bring them back to dinner,"
They shouted in hopeful glee ;
And they sternly set their faces
To fight with the mighty sea.

But oh, 'twas a fearful battle !
Little we knew that day,
As our families met together,
Of the fierce storms far away.
But the God of the sea is mighty,
And He heard the impassioned cry
Of those who in saving others
Were likely themselves to die.

They wrought with the angry billows,
They conquered the mighty wave,
And swiftly their boat was crowded
With men whom they came to save.
Then back to their own small vessel
Did the fisher-lads make way ;
And oh ! 'twas a happy party
That dined in the smack that day !

And I think we may learn a lesson,—
When the Father would make us glad
With a pleasure beyond all others
He sends us to help the sad ;



And when, with a thought of the Saviour,
We use the power He has given,
Our earthly holidays brighten
To the joy and bliss of heaven.

A NEW YEAR'S PRAYER.

"Lord, it is nothing with Thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power : help us, O Lord our God ; for we rest on Thee, and in Thy name we go."

THERE are mists about us. The merry bells,
Sounding over the hills and dells,
Bring to our greeting another year ;—
But we cannot guess till its months appear
If 'twill be happy, or full of woe ;
But this, our Father, we surely know :
Whatever its changing scenes may be
Our lives will ever have need of Thee.

But we are not frightened, for Thou art strong.
O God, if the battle be fierce and long,
We will earnestly hasten Thy face to seek,
Who can give the triumph to us the weak.
Thy help is mighty. We have no power,
But be Thou near in each trying hour,
And every day, as it dawns, shall be
As a glad thanksgiving brought to Thee.

We have heard the story of all the years
That were bright with gladness and dim with tears,
The wondrous tale of Thy faithfulness,
Ready to pardon, and swift to bless ;

And how can we fear the months to be,
Since we know that our lives are safe with Thee ?
Nay, we are happy ; the year shall bring
The gifts that are best from Thy hands, O King.

But help us still, for we rest in Thee,
And our hearts grow calm as a summer sea ;
Thou makest the corn and wine increase,
Thou givest Thy children Thine own deep peace.
Shall we not trust in Thee evermore
Though we see not the path that lies before ?
Thy love will give us whate'er is best,
And help us still, for in Thee we rest.

And in Thy name do we onward go,
Facing our future of joy or woe ;
There are hosts that gather, and foes who fight,
But we will not shrink from the darkest night.
O God, our Helper, whate'er betide
Still in Thy mercy with us abide,
And our songs shall rise, for the dim new year
Shall prove a Friend as the months appear.

We do not know what the year shall be,
But, Lord, the darkness is light to Thee,
Our way is open, Thou knowest all,
Nor can any evil our hearts enthrall,
Since Thou art ruling ! O give to us
The faith that shall ever trust Thee thus ;
And then, come sorrow, or want, or shame,
Forward we go as in Thy great name.



TRANSITION.

"So Moses the servant of the Lord died there ; his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated."—DEUT. xxxiv.

IT is good to work till the gloaming comes,
How softly the daylight died
To him who leaned on the arm of God,
As they came up the mountain-side ;
And how tenderly turned he his face away
From the scene at his feet outspread,
And entered the land of unclouded light,
While they mourned for their friend as dead.

So, if I might, would I pass away
From the midst of a well-filled life,
Stealing aside from the busy world,
With its murmurs of war and strife ;
Speaking good words to the very last,
If the Father would give them me,
And looking on to the sunny world,
Where the triumph is yet to be.

I shall love for ever the green grass slopes,
And the fields of the standing corn,
My heart will answer the carol song
Of the lark in the early morn ;
But my face is turned to a better land.
Shall I weep that I go away ?
Oh, I know by a whisper that comes to me,
It is better to go than stay.

But I should be leaving my friends behind,
You tell me in graver tone ;
Oh no one who enters the Father's house
Can ever be strange or lone ;
And I should be leaving my work undone ?
But I think in that land so fair,
There is good, true service for willing hands,
And I can complete it there.

I think how good it would be to die,
Not in weakness or slow decay,
But to wave my hand as a cheery sign,
And silently pass away ;
Not to live and linger with worn-out brain,
And a heart that for age is sad,
But to go while courage and hope are strong,
And my spirit in God is glad.

And yet, I know not the hour or the way
In which I shall reach my home,
If 'tis better to walk but a little way,
Or longer to wait and roam ;
So my Father shall choose for His trusting child,
For I know that His will is best ;
He will tell me how long I may work below,
And when I may take my rest.



THE YEAR OF RELEASE.

WHEN the bells rang their peal through the winterly air,
And startled the worshippers hushed as in prayer,
When the people turned gladly to friends who were near
And whispered, "God give you a happy new year,"
A fiat went forth from God's chamber of peace,
"To some there is dawning the year of release."

They knew not the sign that was put on their brow,
These happy ones soon in His presence to bow,—
When the late light came in and began a new day
They saw not the messenger placed in the way ;
They said, "Will the toil and the sorrow increase ?"
Nor dreamed they had entered their year of release.

With courage they patiently turned to their task,
For strength, not deliverance, dared they to ask ;
They sighed as they took up their burdens again
Of sorrow and weariness, sickness and pain,
Nor ventured to hope that their troubles would cease,
Or joy become theirs in this year of release.

Oh, could they but know what the new year will bring,
What glad songs of freedom and hope they would sing !
How willingly suffer and toil for awhile,
Thinking aye of their Lord and His welcoming smile !
And "the patience of hope" would grow strong and increase,
As they counted the days of their year of release.

For, ere it has passed, the King's face they shall see,
And ever from sorrow and sighing be free ;

The things that perplex them shall all be made plain,
And the evil of sin never touch them again,
They will gain the bright country of pleasure and peace,
Thrice happy ones living their year of release.

Who are they, thus near to the end of their way,
With sad faces meeting that wonderful day?
We know not, they know not, the Master alone
Sees who shall have rest in the joy of His throne ;
We may say while our spirits grow strong in His peace,
" It may be—it may be—*my* year of release."

Let us live with that hope in our hearts day by day,
We can bear that which passes so swiftly away ;
There is work yet unfinished, tasks yet to fulfil,
And lessons to learn of our Father's good will ;
Let us spend, as for Him, the time shortly to cease
And God make us meet for our year of release.

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